Sir Manmatha Nath Mukerji, Kt, Ex-Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court and sometime member of His Excellency the Governor-General's Executive Council, in his Foreword, says —

"This Hindu view of life or the essence of the Sanātana Dharma is clearly presented in this work in which an admirable attempt has been made to give an epitome of several *Śāstras* in order to illustrate the many-sided development of Hindu civilization and culture Its simple style and lucid expressions are the attractive features of the work and will certainly appeal to those who are intellectually inquisitive to know a little about the vast subject within a short compass"

FOREWORD

It is not without a degree of diffidence that I proceed to write a few lines as foreword for a book which purports to reproduce the substance of some of the teachings that have fallen from the lips of His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Sankarācārya Svāmi of Kāmakoti Pītha. My exceedingly imperfect knowledge—if knowledge it can ever be called—of the subject equips me ill for the task

The present treatise is an attempt to give a lucid and philosophical exposition of the necessity, meaning and importance of the *Varnāśramadharma* in the Hindu scheme of Life, which is the outcome of an organic conception To be able to realise the full significance of this view of life we have to understand the drift of the teachings of the Vedas in their two-fold aspects, the *Karmakānda* and the *Jñānakānda*. The former comprises the *Samhitās* or Collection of Hymns and the *Brāhmanas* that deal with rituals, and the latter is composed of *Āranyakas* and *Upanisads* which seek to explain the essence of the Supreme The Vedas are regarded as co-eternal with the very process of creation and were revealed to the seers in their esoteric moods The gods and goddesses involved in the *Samhitās* are deified Nature In spite of this multiplicity of these deities of Nature with their individual names, the seers or philosophers easily discovered their common attributes, which

ultimately led them to arrive at a monotheistic system out of this apparent polytheism of the Vedas The unity so grasped was symbolised in the idea of *Prajāpati*, the Lord of creation and *Viśvakarmā*, the Architect of the Universe It was a transition from diversity to unity, from a plainly sensuous form to a comparatively spiritual one Polytheism is, therefore, more an appearance than a reality The idea of the All-pervading One finds an emphatic expression in the *Purusasūkta* and the *Nāradīyasūkta* of the *Rg Veda*, The conception of the One Supreme Being becomes more explicit in the *Satapatha Brāhmana* in the idea of the *Brahman*, the Great, the Infinite The different gods are but the emanations of that One Spirit This *Brahman* or Infinite is the *Saccidānanda* of the *Upanisads* or the *Vedānta* The total absorption of the individual into this *Saccidānanda* is the highest and most blissful form of realisation, and the various *Śāstras* with their solemn injunctions and codes of discipline point ultimately to this One Goal This is known as the *Parāvidyā* or *Brahmavidyā* as distinguished from the *Aparāvidyā*, i e, knowledge derived from different sciences, schools of philosophy, and literature and grammar etc They are *Vidyās*, none the less, inasmuch as they are no end in themselves, but are to be treated as contributory to spiritual illumination or self realisation. It is for this that these *Śāstras* are known as *Vedāngas* or subsidiary to the Vedas, as they are definite means to the attainment of ultimate knowledge Divorced from this ultimate end the *Śāstras* themselves are reduced to the level of pure word-chopping or sheer pedantry

From the Vedas down to the *Upaniṣads* a chain of evolution can be traced culminating in *Brahmavidyā* or *Ātmadarśana*; and the three stages of *Śravana Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* lead a seeker of truth gradually to the consummation of his existence, the realisation of the Supreme. The *Śāstras* are to be studied, debated, mastered with a penetrating intellect, and the essence of truth thus obtained has got to be realised by austere practices and meditation. Thus one is led from logic to a stage beyond logic,—the transcendental stage.

The one outstanding feature of the religion of the Hindus is that it is founded upon the vision of no individual and its truth does not stand upon the testimony of one person or of any particular sect. The very soul of this religion is its universality, and in this particular respect it towers far above other religions of the world, which owe their existence to the inspired vision of their Prophet-founders. The *Sanātana dharma* is rooted in the revealed wisdom of the Seers, and though there are various sects following different creeds and dogmas, they strive ultimately to reach one and the same goal. All these divergent streams of thought ultimately merge themselves into that One Great Ocean.

The Hindu attitude towards life is one of sublimation of the ordinary duties of everyday life by regarding them as mere means to the realisation of the Infinite. Sometimes it is misunderstood as an attitude of detachment and the Hindu is held up as a misfit, an unpractical visionary. But a closer analysis of the system refutes this charge. The Hindu view of life does not ignore the

practical needs of life, but only invests them with a spiritual significance It considers all activities of life as offering to the Supreme, the Infinite is being constantly realised in the Finite The firm conviction (*Sarvam Brahmamayam Jagat*) that the Infinite permeates the whole world can never make an abject self-seeker of a Hindu He lives for others, for the world and for the All-pervasive Reality His life is thus an opportunity to realise the highest Truth through certain prescribed practices and courses of discipline, and it is a joy to him spontaneously to obey the *Śāstraic* injunctions That the spirit of renunciation rules the daily life of the Hindu is illustrated in the five-fold *Yajña* or sacrifice prescribed for him, before taking his day's meals the Hindu *gṛhastha* must study the Vedas, present offerings in fire to gods and oblations to forefathers and must offer hospitality to guests and food to all living creatures All sacrifices made in this spirit of renunciation naturally lead to the attainment of knowledge which ends in the realisation of the Supreme, that is, ritualistic sacrifices, *Dravyayajña*, utlimately culminate in *Jñānayajña* It is the spirit that counts, and to attain this conversion of the spirit the Hindu undergoes from the cradle to the funeral pyre a course of strict physical and mental discipline, viz *Ahimsā, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacarya* and *Aparigraha*, The various *Samskāras* are also so many means towards the purification of body and mind The most important of the *Samskāras* is marriage, and it embodies a great ideal - far above that of wordly enjoyment It is an attempt to refine the gross carnal appetite into a noble

ideal. The wife is called *Sahadharmini* This is typical of the Hindu attitude. The senses must not be starved, but through proper adjustment soothed and finally sublimated

Upon this analysis of the Hindu view of life it is in the fitness of things that there should be a hierarchy or gradation of people, each according to its ability and aptitude It is the most practical system, offering each an occupation according to his worth. Society is an organised whole and each community is to contribute to its growth and prosperity according to its allotted sphere of work This Hindu view of life or the essence of the *Sanātana dharma* is clearly presented in this work in which an admirable attempt has been made to give an epitome of several *Śāstras* in order to illustrate the many-sided development of Hindu civilization and culture. Its simple style and lucid expressions are the attractive features of the work and will certainly appeal to those who are intellectually inquisitive to know a little about the vast subject within a short compass

CALCUTTA,
1st April, 1940.

MANMATHA NATH MUKERJI

TRANSLATOR'S PREFATORY NOTE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The subjects dealt with in this book were lectures in Tamil delivered by His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya Svāmigal of Śrī Kāñcī Kāmakōṭi Pīṭha at Madras during 1932 and 1933. The lectures were more or less informal conversational discourses delivered on the spur of the moment. These have been collected, edited ably by Pandit K. V. Jagannatha Iyer, Editor-in-Chief 'Kalaimagal', and published in three volumes. The first and third of these forming a natural group deal with themes of a general character while the second volume contains observations on the life, age and teachings of the world-famous Hindu religious reformer Śrī Ādi Śaṅkara Bhagavatpādācārya. The topics brought out in this book are taken from the former.

Valuable as these lectures undoubtedly are, the treasures hidden in them in their original garb form food for the spiritual edification of but a fraction of the reading public. It is with the object of placing these before a larger circle of readers that the present translation into English has been attempted.

I undertook this work with a great deal of natural trepidation and nervousness, being aware that the task called for much higher qualifications and far greater abilities than I possess. Any measure of success achieved in the endeavour is therefore directly attributable to the inherent merit of the original lectures.

Readers unfamiliar with Sanskrit and Tamil etymology will find useful the note appended at the beginning of the book explaining the standard scheme of transliteration of

Sanskrit and Tamil words which has been adopted in these pages

A brief biographical sketch of the author of these lectures—the reigning Pontiff in the religious seat of the Śrī Kāñcī Kāmakōti Pītha—has also been added This sketch includes a historical account of the Pītha itself

The first twenty-seven chapters of this book appeared in a slightly altered form in 'Truth,' a Calcutta periodical Both for the first publication of these in it and for permission for their subsequent reproduction in this book, as also for the general encouragement given from time to time, my special thanks are due to Dr Nalini Ranjan Sen Gupta, M D, and others connected with that Journal

Our thanks are also due to Sir Manmatha Nath Mukerji, Kt, Ex-Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court and sometime Law Member in the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India, for his kind foreword to this book

For readily undertaking the publication of the book with all its financial implications, the literate world owes Mr R Narayanaswamy Iyer, B A, B L, Proprietor of the Madras Law Journal Press, a deep debt of gratitude

As the lectures were being delivered, there was not only the flow of words, but there were, besides, the real presence of the Guru, the radiance of his person, the tone of his voice, the look in his eyes and his captivating smile This book has merely copied the colourless words How can the rest be communicated?

Calcutta,
1st April, 1940

V R SUNDARARAMAN

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NOTE ON THE SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION OF SANSKRIT AND TAMIL WORDS USED IN THIS BOOK

I Sanskrit —

अ=a	क=ka	प=pa
आ=ā	ख=kha	फ=pha
इ=i	ग=ga	ब=ba
ई=ī	घ=gha	भ=bha
उ=u	ङ=na	म=ma
ऊ=ū	च=ca	य=ya
ऋ=r	छ=cha	र=ra
ॠ=r̄	ज=ja	ल=la
	झ=jha	
ऌ=l	ञ=ña	व=va (also "Wa" rarely as in "Swāmi")
ॡ=l̄	ट=ta	श=śa
ए=e	ठ=tha	ष=sa
ऐ=ai	ड=da	स=sa
ओ=o	ढ=dha	ह=ha
औ=au	ण=na	ळ=la
ं (Anusvara)=m	त=ta	क्ष=ksa
[ः] (Visarga)=h	थ=tha	
	द=da	
	ध=dha	
	न=na	

The above is a general table in which each letter of the Sanskrit alphabet has been rendered into the English script As illustrations of how exactly these equivalents are to be applied in the actual transliteration, a few Sanskrit words which occur frequently in the text are given below with their corresponding English forms:—

ऋषि=Ṛsi	शास्त्र=Śāstra
श्री=Śrī	यज्ञ=Yajña
काञ्ची=Kāñcī	पुराण=Purāna
श्रुति=Śruti	शिव=Śiva
स्मृति=Smrti	विष्णु=Visnu
कृष्ण=Krsna	उपनिषद्=Upanisad

II Tamil —

Besides Sanskrit a few texts from Tamil literature also occur in this book in a transliterated form To help the reader understand these clearly a supplementary scheme is given below rendering into the Roman script such of the letters in the Tamil alphabet as do not occur in the Sanskrit language. For the remaining letters of the Tamil alphabet the main scheme given above applies.

எ=e	ழ=ḻa
ஏ=ē	ற=ṟa
ஒ=o	ன=ṉa
ஓ=ō	

HIS HOLINESS AND HIS MUTT

A biographical and historical sketch

Tradition has it that Śankara, the Great Hindu religious teacher, after conquering the rival faiths which prevailed within the Hindu fold at the time and establishing the cult of Advaita but before casting off his mortal coil, established four mutts or religious seats in the four corners of the land. The four places selected for the purpose were Śrngeri in Mysore in the south, Badrināth in the Himālayas in the north, Jagannāth or the present-day Puri in Orissa in the east and Dvārakā in the Bombay Presidency in the west. Four of his principal disciples were installed in these seats of religious teaching as the first gurus and he himself ascended the Sarvajña Pītha or the central seat of omniscience at Kāñcī, the modern Conjeevaram in Madras Presidency. This central seat of teaching is known as the Kāñcī Kāmakoti Pītha. For political reasons the head-quarters of this mutt was shifted from Kāñcī first to Tanjore and then to Kumbhaghonam where it continues to be located to this day.

The records of this mutt contain a chronology which to a great extent is corroborated by those preserved in the mutt at Puri. According to these records the Kāmakoṭi Pītha has been in existence for over two thousand years and as many as sixty-five religious heads have reigned in it so far, excluding the original founder, the great Śankara, and his chief disciple Sureśvarācārya who was the guardian saint of the first Guru, Sarvajñātman—a lad of but seven years at the time of his accession to the seat. A succession

list of these sixty-five ācāryas with chronological details may be seen in N Venkatraman's Śankarācārya, the Great and His successors in Kāñci "

The present guru, Śrīmat Paramahamsa Parivrājakācārya Śrī Candrasekharendra Sarasvatī Śankarācārya Svāmigal, the author of these lectures, is thus the sixty-sixth religious preceptor to hold sway in this seat

Kāñcī or Kāñcīpura, the present day Conjeevaram in the district of Chinglepet in Madras Presidency,—the original seat of this mutt—is one of the seven cities in India which from time immemorial have been held specially sacred by the Hindus, the other six in the group being Kāśī (Benares), Ayodhya, Avanti, Mathurā (Muttra), Hastināpura (New Delhi) and Māya (in Nepalese Terai) Among the evidences testifying to the founding of this central mutt by Śankara may be mentioned a reference to the same which occurs in the Bengali Encyclopædia, Viśvakośa

The principal duties of the mutt are —

(i) the keeping alive of the torch light of Advaita,

(ii) the performance by the presiding Ācārya himself of the daily Pūjās in accordance with the Śaivaite, the Śākta and the Vaisnavaite cults,

(iii) the feeding of Brahmins as part of the deva pūjās and of other poor people who seek its doors, and

(iv) the patronising of indigenous Indian culture devoted to religion and philosophy

The Institution has enjoyed the support of the Hindu public in achieving these objects Various inscriptions in which such acts of munificence on the part of its devotees have been recorded exist among the mutt's documents A collection of these, suitably edited and annotated, is now

readily available. The mutt appears to have enjoyed this patronage even during the days when the country was under Muhammadan rule.

The present Guru was selected for the gadi in 1908 at the tender age of 13 when he had just completed his high school career. The ceremony took place at a small village near Arcot twenty-four miles from Conjeevaram. He is a descendant of the illustrious advaitic scholar and minister to the Tanjore Nayak kings,[1] Govinda Dīksitar, who lived in the latter part of the sixteenth and early years of the seventeenth century. In the very first year of his spiritual career he had to shoulder the responsibility of one of the most important functions of the Pītha—*viz*., the ceremony of the re-consecration of the Tātankas or the ear-rings of the image of the Goddess of the great temple of Akhilāndeśvarī at Jambukeśvaram near Trichinopoly.

Since then His Holiness has been engaged in constant touring throughout the length and breadth of the land, the largest and most noteworthy of which is the one on which he was till recently occupied. This tour started nearly two decades ago and the itinerary has included visits to Benares and other places of importance in Northern India. A feature of this as well as the other tours of His Holiness is that only the most ancient of the means of transport of the country are used in these. His Holiness himself is carried in a palanquin and the rest of the entourage either walk behind or travel in country bullock carts.

A short pen-picture of the mutt and its Gurus is given in K. S. Venkatramani's "Paper Boats" and the following extract from it may be read with interest:—

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[1] Note.—See "Govinda Dīksita and his literary successors" by N. K. Venkatesam Pantulu in Vol. IX, Part I (July 1934) of the Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society.

"The Kāmakoti Pītham is a rare place on earth Every inheritor of its proud name for over thirty generations has for each generation, been the living symbol and exponent of a great and moving faith Strong and strenuous in the day's work, simple in habits, high in culture, fervid in temper, calm and impersonal in action and pure in personal life, they have preserved the tradition and record and the glory of the Kāmakoti Pītham a gentle and even flow of work in the crowded midst of every uneven and conflicting man"

THE SANĀTANA DHARMA OR THE HINDU VIEW OF LIFE

CHAPTER I

WHY THE HINDU RELIGION IS NAMELESS?

THERE are ever so many religions in this world Each has a separate name of its own to distinguish it from the others. All these names are personal and are derived from the founders of the respective faiths Thus Buddhism takes its name from its founder, Lord Buddha, Jainism from Jina, Muhammadanism from its prophet, Muhammad, Christianity from Jesus Christ, Zoroastrianism (the religion of the Parsees) from its founder Zoroaster, and the Chinese religion, Confucianism, from its propounder, Confucius No doubt all these founders of new religions have been great men possessing the power to attract many men to their way of thinking Thus every other religion has a distinctive name of its own on the above lines But if you ask a youngster belonging to our religion what religion he professes, he would, if he happens to have received a little English education, at once reply that he belongs to the Hindu Religion On the other hand if we ask our peasants about the name of our religion, they would

be at a loss to give a common name to it If we put the same query to those employed in writing negotiable documents in the South of India, they would describe themselves as they do at the top of these documents, as belonging to the Śaivite or the Vaiṣṇavite cult These are really sub-divisions in our faith and cannot be taken as representing the whole of it, but even these names are not derived from those of any historic personages but merely follow the names of the respective divine forms selected for personal worship If Hinduism is really the name of our religion, it should have been known and described as such even during the period of our remote forefathers But it would appear that to our ancestors of even a few centuries back, the name Hinduism would have been a strange and meaningless term It is so because ours is a religion without a name

No doubt the sub-divisions in our faith go by certain specific names These again take their names only after the various forms of the one Almighty selected for *upāsanā* and not after human beings For the general faith however it would be difficult to find a common name Of late a name has been much in use *viz*, Sanātana Dharma, but even this cannot be said to be the strictly traditional name of our religion, for in that case it should be known as such to the poor peasant and to the humble widow, as in the case of the followers of other man-made religions But such is not the case

The term Hinduism is really a name somebody has presented us with We can find in History a clue as to how this term came to be coined Our forefathers were once the inhabitants of the region watered by the river Sindhu (the modern Indus) which, to some foreigners who came into contact with us was known as Indus From

this they christened the land in which this river flowed as the Indu Deśa or 'the land of the Indus' Naturally and in course of time they applied this name to the entire Bhāratavarsa of which the part watered by Sindhu formed but a slice Are we not familiar with the saying that 'beyond Hyde Park all is a desert'?

Again, every religion has some distinguishing symbol which at once marks it off from the others The cross of the Christians is one such example The Hindus on the other hand, have no apparent symbol to point to as being common to all of them As we are without a name, even so we are without a common symbolising badge Ours, therefore, appears to be a religion without a name and a distinguishing mark! For instance, some of us wear the sacred ash, while others wear the "Visnupād" on their foreheads Some among us are "Vīra Vaisnavas" and an equal number, the 'Lingāyats' and similar others, are "Vīra Śaivas" All these, however, have the consciousness that they are the adherents of one common religion

The real grandeur of our faith consists in its being nameless. The need for names for an article arises only when there are many of that type so that each could, in some way, be distinguished from the others But if there is one and one only of that article, why need a name for it? To take a concrete instance, if there are, say, four Rāmasvāmis or Mukerjis in a village we must give them different initials or personal names to tell the one from the other or otherwise distinguish between them by calling one of them, Rāmasvāmi or Mukerji, the dark, another of them, Rāmasvami or Mukerji, the fair, and so forth If there be only one Mukerji or Rāmasvāmi, there is hardly any further naming required

Even so, with our religion What is religion? It is that which shows us the way out of this miserable cycle of births and deaths or in other words sins and sorrows It was pointed out at the outset that other religions are known by the names of their respective founders These religions therefore did not exist before the rise of these great personages Specific dates are assigned to every such religion It naturally follows that ours is a religion which existed before all these other faiths were born Thus should it have existed at a time when it was the only religion in the world, administering to the spiritual needs of the humanity as a whole This then explains our religion not having had a specific original name, as there was no second religion from which this name should distinguish it It was merely the Dharma—a word synonymous with Religion

It would appear then that its having no specific name is itself a distinctive symbol Although the religion has no distinguishing name of its own there is in it a common basis—*viz*, the faith in the final authority of the Vedas *i e*, "Veda Prāmāṇyam", in spiritual matters This is also implied in the saying current in some of our mother tongues that makes the Vedas a simile for authoritativeness!

Because of their unshakable authority as the eternal divine laws even persons who were ordained by them as ineligible to utter the vedic mantras, as part of the vedic duties, reverentially obeyed the teachings The question then arises that, if ours was the only religion prevalent at the time, were our religious principles observed by all the inhabitants of the world? We can now give plenty of instances to show that the reply to this question is in the affirmative.

For instance, one of the charges against Jesus which made the Jews crucify him was that Jesus drank water from a well intended for the lower classes. Does this not imply the existence of a caste system even before Jesus's time?

Again an inscription unearthed in Egypt, dated 1280 B. C contains the terms of a treaty between Rameses II and the Hittites In this treaty the vedic deity, "*Maitrāvaruna*," has curiously enough been cited as the witness! (*See* H R. Hall's "Ancient History of the Near East"—pp. 364 *et seq*) Besides, in the ancient Egyptian Chronology, we find a series of kings bearing the name of Rāma as for example, Rameses I, Rameses II, Rameses III, etc.

In the island of Madagascar off the Eastern coast of South Africa, as many as seventy-five per cent of the names of places happen to be sanskrit names Most of them are akin to the name of the hero of the Rāmāyana.

We are all aware of the Great Sahara Desert in Northern Africa There is a theory that all deserts once formed the beds of the seas or Sāgaras (सागर) Is the suggestion far-fetched, that the modern name, Sahara, is a corruption of the Sanskrit "Sāgara" (सागर)? It is said that while the Sahara was under water there was a thick population around its banks and that the names of those people were mostly Sanskrit and were even related to the name of the lord of Kosala (*See* Encyclopædia Brittannica, Vol XXIII, Title—Sahara)

Evidences such as these are not wanting in the opposite part of the Globe In distant Mexico a festival is being celebrated at about the same time as the Indian "Navarātri" or "Dusserah" and it is known as "*Rāmasītā*" (*See* p 56 of the Text and Plate 24 in T W F Gann's

"The Maya Indians of Southern Yucaton, North and British Honduras".) Further, the excavations made in that country have resulted in an abundance of the idols of lord Gaṇēśa being unearthed (Baron Humboldt quoted in Har Bilas Sarda's "Hindu Superiority" p. 151). The ancient inhabitants of those parts were "Āstikas" (*i.e.*, those who believed in "Veda Prāmāṇyam" or the authoritativeness of the Vedas) a term which still lingers in the modern name "Aztecs" which is now given to this group!

In Peru, a country in the West of South America, the inhabitants were sun worshippers. Their principal festivals of the year fell on the solstices. (*See*—Asiatic Researches, Vol. I, P. 426.) They were known as the "*Incas*," a name derived from one of the names of the Sun, "*Ina*."

While speculating in this strain, it is tempting to make another observation on the remarkable similarity between a series of names of places in California and several puranic names. We have all heard of the well-known story of the sixty thousand sons of King Sagara being burnt to ashes by the sage Kapila, to save whose souls their descendant Bhagīrata, is said to have brought down the Ganges to the earth. The story goes that the horse sought for by the sons of Sagara was found in the netherlands (*Pātāla Loka*). America being roughly India's antipodes on the globe, is this description of that land in the Purānas as the netherland to be laughed at? Is it not very suggestive that California might be a corruption for "*Kapila Aranya*" (Kapila's forest), and that the two modern islands near by, *viz.*, "*The Horse Island*" and "*The Ash Island*," might represent the places where the horse of King Sagara (सगर) was kept and where King Sagara's sixty thousand sons were burnt to ashes?

Figs 128 and 129 at page 621 of "The Native Tribes of Central Australia," by Spencer and Gillen (Macmillan, 1899) depict a kind of dance said to be current among the wild native tribes of Australia This dance is described in the book as *"The Śiva Dance"* On closer examination, the dancers appear to have painted on their forehead a third eye, a fact suggestive of the possibility that the people of even such distant lands as Australia were once well-versed in Vedic lore

Nearer home in the Eastern Archipelago evidences of the prevalence of the Hindu Faith are abundant Java bristles with relics of Hindu cult and worship In Borneo there is a forest which the Westerners were for a long time describing as a virgin forest (*i e*) not having been penetrated by man (Wallace—"The Malay Archipelago", pp 44-45) A party of explorers, after they had gone a few hundreds of miles, discovered a stone which contained an inscription commemorating in detail the performance of some specified *"Yāgas"* and *"Yajñas"* (Vedic sacrifices) by a certain king (Yūpa inscriptions of Mūlavarman of Koeti, Borneo)

All these evidences only go to prove that our religion which was the only religion the world possessed for a long time, had spread all over the world

It will not be out of place to examine here some conceptions of Hinduism about the Universe The common Hindu belief about our terrestrial Globe is that it is composed of seven *"Dvīpas"* or land masses Ādi Sankara Bhagavadpādācārya refers to this in the following sentence in one of his books —

सप्तद्वीपा च मेदिनी ।

Each one of these *"Dvīpas"* consists of several *"Varsas"* each of which in turn consists of several

"*Khandas*" (खण्ड) Our country (*India*) has been described in our scriptures as "*Bharata Khanda*", said to be a part of "*Bhārata Varsa*", which in turn is supposed to be situated in "*Jambūdvīpa*" Mount "*Meru*" (the modern peak, *Everest* in the *Himalayas*) is supposed to be to the north of all the seven "*Dvīpas*" There is an ocean belt between every two *Dvīpas* The sun and the moon are said to move round "*Meru*"

Let us now examine in detail the real import of these conceptions The Westerners teach us in our geography books that the earth is round and they flatter themselves with the thought that this truth was first revealed to us by them The Sanskrit term for "geography" is "*Bhū Gola*" (भूगोल) which itself means "*the round earth*" Is not the very existence of this word proof of the fact that our ancients were aware of this fundamental geographical truth about the special nature of the Earth? In the ancient Indian mathematical science, words such as "*Khagola*" (खगोल) and "*Bhū Gola*" occur which are further evidences in support of the above In our "*Sankalpa Mantras*" we use the word "*Brahmānda*" while referring to the earth The term *anda* (अण्ड) in this word really means an egg (*i e*) an oval-shaped body!

Let us now imagine the whole earth as a lime fruit with that part of it containing "*Meru*" (Himalayas) directed towards the north as its apex Then "*Meru*" becomes the north pole and, hence, the northern most point on the earth This position, then, will sufficiently explain the saying—"सर्वेषामपि वर्षाणा मेरुरुत्तरत स्थित". The rest of the sphere is all to the south of it To the eye of a man standing on the apex of it, the sun and the moon would appear to go round it (*i e*) the sun would not be exactly

overhead at any part of the year, but would always be to a side of it. This is what is meant by the statement in our *Śāstras* that the sun goes round "*Meru*" There is thus nothing in these conceptions which could be considered as being contradicted by modern geographical discoveries

Let us take another conception Our *Śāstras* say that the Pole star ("*Dhruva*") is exactly above "*Meru*" At first sight this appears to be against the established truths of modern geography Imagine, for a while, that our earth were a spinning top. Let the position occupied by the Pole Star be indicated by a spot exactly above the apex of the top when it rotates quite vertically As the motion of the top varies, its vertical position will also change, so that positions on it other than its apex will come to be directly under the position of Pole Star This phenomenon suggests the possibility that the Pole Star might have been directly over mount "*Meru*" at the time our ancients saw things and recorded them for us in our *Śāstras*, and that, in course of time, this position was swerved from due to changes in the rotation of the earth

All these modern discoveries about the geography of our earth seem, therefore, to have already dawned on our ancient seers References to these truths are also found in the works of *Āryabhatta*, *Varāhamihira*, and *Appayya Dīksita*

Thus we come back to the truth which we established at the outset, *viz*, ours was the only religion extant on the face of the earth for a long time All the other religions of the world have only taken up and developed some phases of our bigger faith which contains all the aspects of the different religions

As our religion or Dharma is the one faith common to all the world, even so, Sanskrit, the language of our reli-

gion, is common to all the other tongues of the world. To-day they call Sanskrit a *"dead language."* Even taking this expression to mean literally, it contains a sublime truth. Which is it that dies?—the body, or the soul? It is the body that dies. The soul is eternal and imperishable. Sanskrit is the soul of all the other languages. Most of the words in the etymology of these languages can be derived from Sanskrit roots or *Dhātus*. The other "living" languages of the world have therefore themselves for the body and Sanskrit for their soul. Applying this theory to Sanskrit, we find that it is a language which is all soul *sans* a-body to envelope it. Hence, the expression *dead language* does not seem to be an altogether inappropriate description of it!

To conclude, our faith and our language once had world-wide existence. The one basis of our religion is the supreme authoritativeness of the *Vedas* (*Veda Prāmāṇyam*). All the other extant religions of the world are but phases of our bigger faith. With a little propaganda characterised more by kindness and love than by conceit and arrogance, it might yet be possible for us to convince others of this truth.

CHAPTER II

A COMMON TENET OF SANĀTANA DHARMA

Within the Hindu Religion itself there exist a number of sub-faiths such as the "Śaiva Siddhānta" of the Śaivaites, the "Pāñcarātra Siddhānta" of the Vaisnavaites, and the religion of the Madhvas These different sects appear to be antagonistic to one another on the surface Yet all are admittedly parts of the bigger whole, the Hindu Religion

We are not now going to discuss the relative superiority of the one or the other of these over the rest But we should try to explore the common beliefs or tenets, in which all these seemingly different sects agree We must also know what the Hindu Religion is

If the search is carried to the very doors of the learned exponents of these different faiths, they fail to supply us with a clear answer They only revel in magnifying their differences The books and treatises in which these faiths are expounded likewise tend only to emphasise the differences between their respective doctrines Unless there is some common tenet or series of tenets connecting these faiths, Hinduism to which these sects claim to belong, can hardly be considered a single composite religion Let us now see what this common belief could be like

The Hindus all over the country at the time of reciting the holy Rāmāyana of Vālmīki as an item of daily prayer repeat certain verses both at the beginning and at the conclusion of its recital Of these the following Śloka is one —

स्वस्ति प्रजाभ्यः परिपालयन्तां
न्याय्येन मार्गेण महीं महीशाः ।
गोब्राह्मणेभ्यः शुभमस्तु नित्यं
लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु ॥

In reciting this verse they pray as follows —

May the kings who rule this
earth rule it with justice!
May the people of this world be happy!
May the brahmins and the
cows live in happiness!
May all the worlds be ever covered in bliss!

In this verse it may be noticed that after praying for the happiness of all the worlds and their people in general, the brahmins and the cows are singled out and their well-being is specially prayed for. Why this preferential treatment of the brahmin and the cow, as though they are not contained in the generality of the world's creation? Even assuming that the brahmins are given a preferential treatment in this respect, where is the necessity to distinguish the cows separately? We must know why this distinction is made. We shall have to leave the subject here for a while and proceed further in order to understand this.

The kingdom of Madura in olden days was ruled over by a king known as Kūṉ Pāndyaṉ of the pre-Pallava Pāndya dynasty. He was a Hindu by birth but was, later in his life, converted by the Jains of the place to Jainism. He became such a zealous devotee of his new religion that he became an aggressive persecutor of the Hindus. He prohibited the use of the Vibhūti-Rudrākṣam by anyone. He prohibited the smearing of the sacred ashes over the body, a custom to which a powerful section of Hindus—

the Śaivites, were intensely devoted. His wife and his minister were great bhaktas of Lord Śiva But even so, they could not disobey the king's command. They could, therefore, conduct their worship of Lord Śiva only on the sly! They were unceasingly praying for the reconversion of the king back to his natural religion.

One day the famous Tamil Śaivaite Saint, Jñānasambandha, who is one of the four principal "Gurus" for this section of Hindus and who is considered an "Avatāra" of Lord Subrahmanya (Kārtikeya of Northern India) happened to visit the kingdom of this Kūṉ Pāndya with his disciples The queen and the minister, hearing of this, obtained "Darśan" of the great saint in secret and requested him to bring the king back to his natural faith The saint, consenting to do this, came over to the city of Madura, the king's capital, and took his abode in a mutt [1] The Jains, getting scent of the saint's mission, set fire to his mutt The Saint prayed to Lord Śiva and desired that the fire should burn the evil-doers themselves By the will of Lord Śiva, the fire affected the king himself in the shape of a high fever All the attempts of the king's Jain advisers to cure him of the malady were in vain The minister then seized the opportunity and, apprising the king of the greatness of Jñānasambandha, suggested the Saint's help being sought to cure the king of his ailment.

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1 This incident is chronicled for us in a verse in the "Tēvāram", which is the collective name for the verses of devotion sung in praise of Lord Mahādeva by the Tamiḻ Śaivaite Saints or "Nāvaṉmārs" The verse, transliterated into English, would run as follows —

Poyyarāmamaṉār koḷuvum sudar
Paiyavē ceṉṟu Pāṇḍiyaṟkkākavē

The fanaticism of the king yielded for the time being and, in his anxiety to secure some kind of relief from his disease, the king consented to the minister's advice The saintly personage was invited to the king's presence. The usual debate ensued between the great Sambandha and his Jain adversaries regarding the superiority of their respective faiths It was agreed that each was to cure one half of the king's body of his disease with the aid of their spiritual powers and that whichever party failed to do so should accept defeat Jñāṉasambandha smeared the left-hand side of the king's body—the part allotted to his care—with the sacred ash and chanted ten verses of the "Tēvāram" [1] glorifying the sacred ash That half of the king's body immediately became perfectly cured The right-hand side of it—the one assigned to the Jains—failed to become similarly normal despite all their invocations

The Jains, not satisfied with this result of the test, challenged Sambandha to cure the right-hand side also The Saint recited the same verses once again and smeared that part of the body also with the sacred ash Again, as though by magic (by the grace of Lord Śiva), the fever transferred itself to the left-hand side, leaving the right-hand one normal Thereafter, feeling for the king's excruciating pains, Sambandha cured the whole body of the disease

Though thoroughly convincing even this test failed to make the obstinate Jains accept their defeat The king's sympathies too were still on the side of the Jains A further test was called for Before its commencement,

1 The first of these is the well-known verse commencing with the line which, in transliteration, would run as follows —

Mantiramāvatu nīṟu,
Vāṉavar mēlatu nīṟu, etc

however, Saint Sambandha went to Lord Somasundara's temple in Madura and prayed for success in the coming contest The verse he chanted on this occasion, transliterated into English, would run as follows —

Vēta vēlviyai nintanai ceytulal
Ātamilliyamanodu tērarai
Vātil venru alikkatiruvullamē
Pātumātutanāya paramanē
Jñāla ninpugalē mika vēndum ten
Ālavāyil uraiyum yemmatiyē

—Sambandha's Tēvāram—Tiruvālavāy.

It was agreed at this contest that each party should write out the principal tenets of its faith on a palm leaf and set it afloat in the river Vaikai and that whichever leaf went up the stream should be deemed as containing the higher truth The palm leaf of Sambandhar floated against the stream while that of his adversaries was washed down by the current The Jains were still obstinate and would not own their defeat A further test was suggested by the Śaivaite Saint The two leaves were to be consigned to the fire and whichever leaf would be burnt by the flames was to indicate the worsted party Sambandhar's leaf remained unburnt while that of the Jains was reduced to ashes The Jains had at last to bow before the superior faith of Saint Sambandha

Thus goes the Śaivite story in the Periyapurāna, but to come to our point, the palm leaf of the great Saint had on it a verse [1]which, in a free translation, contains the following prayer —

1 Which, transliterated, would run as —

Vālka antanar vānavar āninam
Vīlka tanpunal vēntanum ōnkuka
Alka tīyatellām aran nāmamē
Cūlka vaiyakamum tuyar tīrkavē.

May the brahmins live happily,
May the devas dwell in happiness,
May the cows live happily,
May the cool rains fall in their seasons over the earth,
May the kings ever rule the earth righteously,
May evil be put down,
May the worlds resound with the holy name of Mahādeva,
May pain and sorrow disappear from the face of the earth

Thus whatever be the intricate nature of the philosophy of the *Śaiva Siddhāntins*, in a verse such as this, which was supposed to bring out the quintessence of their faith, the same place is given to the brahmin and the cow as in the śloka in Sanskrit quoted at the outset

Another instance is furnished by the following stanza from the Mahābhārata—

नमो ब्रह्मण्यदेवाय गोब्राह्मणहिताय च ।
जगद्धिताय कृष्णाय गोविन्दाय नमो नमः ॥

—Śānti-parva, 46, Ślokas 12-6.

which means —

Obeisance to Him Who worships Brahman, Who is for the good of the cows and the brahmin and also of the world—repeated obeisance to Kṛṣṇa, obeisance to Govinda

Let us now try to enquire why, in all these verses, the brahmin and the cow have received this special mention

We all know that, for most of our doubts, we may find satisfactory explanation in the song of songs, the "Bhagavad Gītā" of Lord Kṛṣṇa Let us see what light is shed on the subject of our present enquiry by the Gītā

There is a work known as the "Gītāmangalācarana" the 4th verse of which runs as follows —

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्स. सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृत महत् ॥

This means —

The Upanisads are the cows from which Lord Krsna, the milkman, draws the milk of Gītā with the help of Arjuna, the calf Whoever drinks this milk is the wise one

The significance of this simile is that as the milk given by the cow is useful both to the calf (for which it is intended by the mother) and to the world, even so the Gitā, first taught by the Lord to Arjuna, forms spiritual food for the whole of mankind There are numerous other works in our religious literature to which a reference may be made in our attempt to clear our doubt regarding the special treatment accorded in our religion to the Brahmin and the cow Although there may be differences of opinion in the Tattvārtha (तत्त्वार्थ) of the Gītā it is an acknowledged fact that the Gītā is an important book of authority for the Hindu Religion Therefore the attempt to seek a solution in the Bhagavad Gītā has the special merit of invoking an authority which will have the acceptance of one and all

Verses 10 and 11 of chapter III of the Bhagavad Gītā run as follows —

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥
देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥

2

These verses may be translated as follows —

Having first created mankind together with sacrifices, the Prajâpati said By this shall ye propagate, let this be to you the cow of plenty

With this do ye nourish the Gods and the Gods shall nourish you, thus nourishing one another, ye shall attain the Supreme God

—*Translation—A Mahadēva Śāstri s*

Before examining the meaning of these verses let us consider the ordinary processes of exchange and barter noticeable in our daily life We export what we get in abundance in one place to another where they are scanty and get in return what the people of that place have surplus to their needs We pay to the workmen for the service they render to us We feed the cow and the cow gives us milk We pay taxes to the Government and the Government protects us The Hindus believe that such transactions of the nature of exchange occur in the other worlds also The above verses of the Gītā, mention an instance of this exchange

The "sacrifice" or "*Yajña* or *Yāga*" referred to in the first of these verses requires for its successful performance three essential requisites viz, "*the mantras*" or the prayer chanted, the "*Deva*" or the deity worshipped, and the "*Havis*" or the offering made The "*mantra*" is chanted by the *Brahmin*, the deity is contemplated upon by the mind, and the most essential requisite for the "*Havis* or *Hōma*" is the ghee from cow's milk

It is now clear why the Brahmin and the cow have been assigned such exalted position in our religion as that referred to in the sloka quoted at the outset and in the other verses that followed The Brahmin takes pre-

cedence over others because on him is enjoined the duty of preserving with their due efficacy the "*mantras*" with which the vedic sacrificial rites or "*Yajña* or *Yāga*" are to be performed The importance of the cow lies in its yielding the *ghee* with which the sacrificial offerings are to be made to the "*devas*"

According to the Vedas, the good that results from the performance of a sacrifice is not only for the benefit of the Brahmin and the cow to whom principally the success of the sacrificial rites is due, but also for that of the entire community of which these form members It follows therefore that if the vedic sacrifices are to be properly conducted—which is only another way of saying if the happiness of mankind is to be provided for—the well-being of the Brahmin and the cow is to be preserved

It is this contribution to universal happiness through Vedic Yajñas which makes all the various sub-divisions of our religion agree in wishing for the welfare of the Brahmin and the cow, though in various other details there are differences in their respective tenets

CHAPTER III

THE SĀMĀNYA DHARMAS OR THE ORDINARY RELIGIOUS DUTIES OF ALL HINDUS

The Manu Dharma Śāstra enunciates the following as the common religious duties of all the followers of Hindu Religion

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेय शौचम् इन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।

The five duties enumerated above are the principal ones among our common Dharmas The Vedas have laid stress upon devotion to the parents, devotion to the Guru or preceptor, bhakti towards God and hospitality as Sāmānya Dharmas besides the above-mentioned five specified by Manu *viz*, *ahimsā*, *satyam* or truth, *asteyam* or desirelessness, *śouca* or purity and *indriyamgraha* or control of the senses

सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । आचार्यदेवो भव । अतिथिदेवो भव ।

—Taittirīya Upanisad

AHIMSĀ

As a virtue this is indispensable to all We have no justification for taking the life of even such an insignificant creature as an ant None of our actions should result in causing unnecessary pain to any living creature That is real *Ahimsā* The practice of this virtue has been described as a path finally leading to *Yoga*, or the complete detachment of the mind from all its activities

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः । —*Yoga Śāstras*

Desires arise in our minds It is the mind that gives rise to all our thoughts, both good and bad Hence it can be truly said that our mind is the primary cause of all our evils The seers of the Upanisads have said —

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।

—Amrtabindūpanisad

The mind is the root cause of both *Bandha* or bondage and *Moksa* or salvation or emancipation from worldly bondage The mind never remains as one would like it to be When we try to concentrate our attention on a particular object or thought, our mind begins to wander When very often we would very much like to think of nothing at all in particular—a type of freedom from the worries and cares of this world—our mind would continue its train of thoughts If one tries to remain silent, one can do so by controlling one's tongue Similarly the eyes can remain without seeing if we wish to do so But the mind is uncontrollable Even as a mad man has no control over his senses, the sober man has no power to hold his mind in a position which he likes Pleasure and pain are felt for us by the mind and intimated to us If we attain to a state of perfect control over our mind, *Buddhi-Svādhīna*, we should be able to induce it to remain in any desired state When we feel pain in a particular part of the body, if we wish that our mind should remain without thinking about the pain, it should remain so But the mind does not stay like that If it remains so we may be said to have controlled our feelings and are then in a state of *Nirodha* In this state of perfect control over the mind continuous meditation is compared to "*Tailadhārā*" or the uninterrupted "*Flow of oil*" The attainment of this state of

complete mastery over one's mind is even higher than contact with the Almighty Seeing God brings about joy or bliss (*Ananda*) for the time being On the other hand, he who has absolute control over his mind can, at will, make his mind experience this bliss or *Ananda* and become indentified with the impersonal Almighty At this stage the mind will be in a state of abject surrender This state of mental evolution of a person is known as *Yoga* The conversion of the ordinary changing mind into a state of abject control should be aimed at by every Hindu The scriptures say that this is possible even within one's own lifetime

तमेव विद्वानमृत इह भवति ।—*Purusa Sūkta*

Verse 23 in chapter 5 of the *Bhagavad Gītā* runs as follows —

शक्नोतीहैव य सोढु प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भव वेग स युक्त स सुखी नर ॥

He who in this very life can resist the onsets of passion (lust and anger) is a *Yukta* or one identified with the Supreme and is really happy A *Yukta* is he who possesses *Yoga* or the power to subdue the mind *Yoga* is not a process that has been prescribed for the Rsis only as some are prone to think As a matter of fact *Yoga* as a cure for passions is intended more for the ordinary man who falls an easy victim to the disease of the uncontrolled mind

What are the means for subjugating the mind? There are two methods—the *Bahiranga-Sādhana* (बहिरङ्गसाधन) and the *Antaranga-Sādhana* (अन्तरङ्गसाधन) We should refer to those who know about these paths and who have controlled their minds by their practices The Lord Krsna was one

who had subdued his mind at all times, as also Śrī Ādi Sankarācārya Some are born with a fair complexion Others become fair through changes in climatic conditions or persistent covering of the body with attire Certain created beings even from birth fly Others fly at a later stage of growth The fish knows to swim at the very birth We learn swimming at youth or boyhood Even so the Lord Īśvara is born with a controlled mind We should all try to attain to the state of the controlled mind as we are not born with the same As examples of those who practised and later attained the fully perfected and subjugated mental stage may be mentioned the seers, Sadāśiva Brahmendra and Vidyāranya

Of the two paths or *Sādhanas* mentioned above, the former *viz*, *Bahiranga Sādhana*, includes the practising of virtues such as charity, helping others, the performing of *Karmas*, such as *Sandhyā Upāsana*, *Yajña*, *Vedādhyayana*, etc, with absolute devotion and faith, and so on These will lead us to the desired control over the mind The second or the internal means (अन्तरङ्गसाधन) includes the practice of the virtue of *Ahimsā*, or non-injury to fellow living beings

The observance of *Ahimsā* is a very efficient means of attaining mastery over the mind Before considering, however, how *Ahimsā* forms a powerful *Sādhāna* for the attainment of this mastery over the mind, it would be as well to know something about the potentiality of the mind itself

It may be said at the outset that there is nothing which the mind cannot achieve It is really like the mighty elephant in prowess and, like that animal, is utterly useless unless it is tamed and brought under control Left to itself,

it can only cause harm to the possessor The mind is a thousand times stronger or capacious than the elephant. The great sages Viśvāmitra and Hanumān are two instances of persons who possessed the might of the controlled mind That same mind exists in us also It is said in Vedānta that the creation of the whole Universe was the work of one mind It may also be truly said that even to the small mind of the ant all the world is insufficient The mind may very well be likened to the demon in the story of King Vikramāditya We are all familiar with the tremendous amount of services which the demon gave its master after its subjugation Even so is the case with the mind It is this subjugation of the mind that is known as *Yoga* *Ahimsā* or non-injury to living beings, may be considered as one of the principal components of *Yoga* Those who have conquered the mind have stated that they had first strictly practised *Ahimsā* before attaining to the Yogic state.

Thus *Ahimsā* has been described in Manu Dharma Śāstra as the first of the Sāmānya Dharmas and in the Yoga Śāstra as the first step of *Yoga* Such is the greatness of this virtue

Even as there are a number of by-products besides a main product in an industry, so there are what may be termed 'incidental' benefits arising out of any *karma* or deed, though its performance may have been undertaken with an entirely different object These incidental benefits are known as *Avāntara Prayojana* As a good example of this may be cited our going to a temple Darśan and worship of God in the temple is the main end in view, but among the incidental benefits accruing from the visit may be mentioned, listening to any religious discourse or exposition that may be going on at the time, intercourse

with learned and religious-minded people who might be visiting the shrine at the same time, listening to devotional music, etc

Likewise the practising of this virtue of *Ahimsā* has also got its *Avāntara Prayojana* or incidental advantages The main benefit aimed at is, of course, control over the mind, but conquest of other living beings is one of these incidental results Says the Yōga Śāstra in support of this —

अहिंसा प्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्याग ।

—Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras*—4

One who succeeds in practising *Ahimsā* can pacify every being he happens to come across

The ideal of *Ahimsā* to be aimed at by the aspirant for mental control consists in his not wishing to cause bodily or mental pain to his fellow beings He should refrain even from uttering any statement which is likely to wound another's feelings When we see a man injuring another, we would notice, on final analysis, that the former was provoked to do it through some lapse on the part of the latter Otherwise there is no natural incentive for anybody to harm or harbour ill-feeling against anyone else Let us take the case of a child which from ignorance causes the roof of its house to be set on fire Under natural circumstances the immediate concern of the father will be to put down the fire rather than start chastising the infant Later on he might take such steps as to prevent its recurrence Likewise should we all act towards all evil-doers We should treat them as children That alone would be the true practising of *Ahimsā*

As has been already said, *Ahimsā* when practised in this, its ideal form, brings about control of the mind as the

main benefit and control over other beings as an incidental benefit. Before one who has observed it in its true sense even an assassin will be turned away from his evil thought. In the presence of one who has an absolutely controlled mind, even cruel persons will be in a state of mental peace. This is the *Avāntara Prayojana* of *Ahimsā* which will come of its own accord

Ahimsā should be practised to the maximum degree by Sannyāsins At the time they get initiated into this *Āśrama*, they take a vow of *Ahimsā* promising before God that they will not make themselves objects of fear to any mortal being

अहिंसन् सर्वभूतान्यन्यत्र तीर्थेभ्य. ।

—Chāndogya Upanisad

Hence it is that a sannyāsi is forbidden from cooking his own food or even from such an act as plucking a leaf from its parent tree.

A *Grhastha* or house-holder is expected to observe *Ahimsā* so far as its observance does not interfere with his performance of the vedic *karmas*

SATYA

The definition of *Satya* is contained in the following quotation —

वाङ्मनसयोरैक्यरूपं सत्यम् ।

The perfect agreement of word and thought is truth God has given man the faculty of speech only with the object that he should always speak what the mind thinks The Hindu believes that whoever does not do so but uses his tongue in uttering falsehood is destined to be born as dumb cattle in his next birth

We saw when dealing with *Ahimsā* that an exception in regard to its strict observance has been made in the case of the *Grhastha* alone There is a similar exception in the case of this virtue also For instance when a person enumerates the faults of others, even though his utterances may be quite in accordance with truth, yet his act does not constitute *Satya* or truth telling This exception therefore consists in not telling such truth as is likely to produce harm to society Hence, the following definition of सत्यम् (*Satyam*)

सत्यं भूतहित प्रियम् ।

—आदिशङ्करप्रश्नोत्तररत्नमालिका—*Adi Śankara's Praśnottara Ratna Mālikā*

Let us try to reason out this aspect of truth-telling In all our actions in this world we should be actuated by the only motive of trying to do good to others Truth-telling, being an action, should hence be practised with the same end in view If, on the other hand, one always talks ill of another, one is more prompted by "passion and anger"—*Kāma* and *Krodha* (काम—क्रोध)—than by the object of being of help to society His truth-telling (which certainly it is, as the man spoken ill of may, really, be a wicked person) will not, according to the second definition, therefore, constitute *Satya* (सत्य) Real *Satyam* (सत्यम्) hence consists in speaking well of others, ignoring their lapses Even the words spoken should be so gently uttered as not to annoy the hearer The *Satyam* (सत्यम्) so far described is the *Satyam* (सत्यम्) of the tongue or 'spoken truth' Our religion goes further than this and prescribes that we should observe *Satyam* (सत्यम्) even in our thoughts, and actions

Likewise, there is also a kind of "bodily *Satyam*" For instance, in a gathering where all members present are supposed to have purified themselves by the day's morning bath, one who pretends to have bathed commits the sin of "bodily *Asatya* (असत्य)" We should endeavour to be true in all the *Trikaranas* i e, in thought, word as well as in deed

Like *Ahimsā*, *Satyam* too has an incidental benefit—(*Avāntara Paryojanam*) If we constantly practise truth-telling a stage will be reached when our mind will think only of *satyam* and our tongue speak nothing but truth At that stage even if, by a slip of the tongue, we happen to utter an untruth, it will become truth The power which a man acquires through constant truth-telling, of his spoken word always denoting truth, is known as the "*vārthai siddhi*

A test of real truth-telling consists in seeing whether even in the dream state or *Svapnāvasthā* one thinks only of truth-telling Then one gets *Satya Siddhi* and whatever such a person says will come to pass

One should not, however, practise this Dharma with this *Avāntara Prayojana* or incidental benefit in view

ASTEYA

The term *Asteya* means that we should not covet or steal other people's belongings Refraining from this vice is one of the ordinary duties enjoined on us by our religion

ŚAUCA

Śauca represents purity of body and mind Bodily cleanliness, as everyone knows, brings about mental purity also Our Dharma Śāstras have laid down definite prescriptions for bodily purity For the last 30 or 40 years

this type of cleanliness is fast disappearing in our land The injunctions in our Śāstras on this subject are quite elaborate as bodily purity is foremost among the essential pre-requisites for the successful performance of the vedic karmas A few of the practical rules to be followed in this connection are given below —

Every one of us should have a separate *Tīrthapātra* or drinking vessel out of which alone we should drink and which no one else should be allowed to use The vessel should be cleaned with the aid of the particular commodities mentioned in the Śāstras for the particular metals of which the vessels are made.

Even if we go out to dine elsewhere we should always take our own allotted *Tīrthapātra* While we bathe we should use mud or *mrttikā* for cleansing our body

INDRIYA NIGRAHA

The Dharma Śāstras prescribe that we should never give free reins to our senses for their activities. We must, so to say, guard ourselves from allowing these to over-feed themselves, but keep them fed on carefully doled-out rations

The above five are the principal *Sāmānya Dharmas* or ordinary duties enjoined on all the followers of the Hindu faith, *i e*, *Āstikas* or the *Vaidikas*.

CHAPTER IV

THE SUPREME AUTHORITIES OF HINDU DHARMA

It is a matter of common knowledge that there are many books in this world Each book deals with a particular subject We also know that out of these millions of publications only one is honoured and respected as none of the others are. The few books so honoured form the scriptures of the various religions in the world Each religion has thus a book which it exalts above all the other human compositions by its adherents, as being the one book containing the teachings of that faith and being, therefore, the one and only place wherein is shown the way to spiritual salvation In most religions these scriptures are worshipped or respected in other ways The Sikhs even build separate temples to house the sacred book of their religion and have further honoured it by coining a special term of reverence by which alone they refer to it—*viz*, "Grantha Saheb"!

Let us now see what the corresponding scriptures are for our Hindu Dharma If we ask the followers of the other religions of the world what their scripture is, they will have the answer at their fingers' end On the other hand, if the same query is put to a Hindu he will be bewildered And even where an answer is forthcoming, it will be so varied The "Śaiva Siddhāntins" would mention the Tamil works, "*Tēvāram*" and "*Tiruvācakam,*" as their highest scriptures, while the "Śrī Vaisnavaites"

would assign that place of honour to Śrī Rāmānujā's *Śrī Bhāṣya* (श्रीभाष्य) Again there will be others who would assert that the *Rāmāyana* (रामायण) of Vālmīki is the highest scripture for a Hindu The orthodox pandits, on the other hand, would say that the *Veda* (वेद) forms our highest authority, whereas the modern Hindu who combines in him English education with a little religious-mindedness would single out the *Gītā* (गीता) and give it that place Thus no two answers among these followers of the same faith will be seen to agree!

There is one principal reason which accounts for this difference between the present-day Hinduism and other religions It is the deplorable condition in which we are bringing up our children The children of the followers of the other religions of the world are first treated to a course of religious instruction in some form or other before being taught the other things of the world Among the Hindu boys, however, religious instruction, as a regular course through which they are made to pass, is conspicuous only by its absence! The result is that not understanding the real import of the teachings of our sacred books, we only tend to redicule them, while others decry the books of their rival faiths!

There is also another very strong reason why religious instruction should not be neglected among Hindu children Our religion, more than any other, enjoins on its followers mute acceptance of the teachings of our ancient seers and recommends in unequivocal terms the elimination of the application of individual reason or *Yukti* (युक्ति) in matters of religious doubt In order to be able to tune ourselves to this type of mentality, it is of utmost importance that the mind of the child should be prepared for the acceptance of

these teachings at an age when individual reason has not begun to assert itself On the other hand, we are now reversing the process We fill the child's mind with all types of modern secular information When the application of reason becomes the ruling factor and when, of his own accord but without proper guidance, the grown-up youth or man turns his attention to religion, he is apt to be impatient and gets wholly incorrect views of the various aspects of the teacnings in our sacred books

Before actually proceeding to describe our supreme authorities, it will be useful to examine the real nature of the scriptural texts of religions in general

The requirements of man in this world of ours have been pithily described by the wise as *Dharma* (धर्म), *Artha* (अर्थ), *Kāma* (काम), and *Moksa* (मोक्ष) or the *Purusārtha-catustaya* (पुरुषार्थचतुष्टय) In ordinary languge these may be taken to mean —

(1) the performance of good and righteous deeds,

(2) material wealth,

(3) sensual and mental pleasures, and

(4) spiritual salvation

Let us explain these in a little greater detail Even on a superficial analysis we would find that man's first aim in life is to be happy This happiness he strives for will, on a little reflection, be seen to consist of two kinds, *viz* —

(1) evanescent or momentary happiness, and

(2) eternal happiness

It is natural for us to be contented with a particular type of happiness only so long as we do not think of a greater type of it Even so there is a type of happiness than which there is none greater to be striven for This

type is the fourth *Purusārtha* (पुरुषार्थ), viz, *Moksa* (मोक्ष). He who realises the real nature of this state of eternal bliss will never feel attracted by the lower sensual and mental pleasures of this world To him the second and third *Purusārthas* (पुरुषार्थ) i e, *Artha* (अर्थ) or material riches and *Kāma* (काम) or desires will cease to have any charm. The first *Purusārtha* (पुरुषार्थ) or *Dharma* (धर्म) i e, the performance of goodly and righteous deeds, is a *Sādhana* (साधन) or pathway towards the attainment of the last *viz*, *Moksa* (मोक्ष) The main object of the scriptures of any religion should be to prescribe the exact methods of practising this *Dharma* (धर्म) Hence the name, *Dharma Pramānas* (धर्मप्रमाण), for these scriptures In other words, these works are supposed to be the truest expositions of *Dharma* (धर्म)

The other religions of the world extol *Moksa* (मोक्ष) or spiritual salvation as a thing to be attained only in the life after death Hinduism, on the other hand, teaches us that this state of eternal bliss could be realised in the present life itself, as attests the following well-known line in the *Purusa-Sūkta* (पुरुषसूक्त) already referred to in the previous chapter,—

तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति ।

The sacred books in our Sanātana Dharma which constitute our *Dharma Pramānas* (or scriptures) are fourteen in number and are enumerated in the quotations reproduced below —

अङ्गानि वेदाश्चत्वारो मीमांसा न्यायविस्तरः ।
पुराणं धर्मशास्त्रं च विद्या ह्येताश्चतुर्दश ॥ —*Manu Smrti*

3

पुराणन्यायमीमांसाधर्मशास्त्राङ्गमिश्रिता ।
वेदा. स्थानानि विद्यानां धर्मस्य च चतुर्दश ॥

—*Yājña Valkya Smṛti*

According to the Hindus all knowledge (ज्ञान) worth acquiring is supposed to be contained in these Hence they are also known as the abode of knowledge, *Vidyā Sthānas* (विद्यास्थान)

These fourteen sacred books are —

(1) to (6) the six *Vedāngas* (वेदाङ्ग) or the organs of the Vedas,

(7) to (10) the four Vedas,

(11) *Mīmāmsā* (मीमांसा),

(12) *Nyāya* (न्याय);

(13) the *Purānas* (पुराण) and

(14) the *Dharma Śāstras* (धर्मशास्त्र)

Of these the first ten, *viz*, the four Vedas and the six *Angas*, have been described in several places in our religious literature as the manifestations of God Himself As one instance of this may be cited the following line from the *Tēvāram*—

"Vēdamōdu āṟangamāyiṉāṉai" (Transliteration of the original in Tamil)

which means "He who forms the Vedas and their six *Angas*"

As an evidence of these fourteen sacred works forming our *Vidyāsthānas* (विद्यास्थान) may be mentioned the following Śloka from the Poet, Śrī Harsa's *Naisadha Kāvya* (नैषधकाव्य) in which he employs pun in stating that Nala was well-versed in these, the "Fourteen *Vidyās*" —

अधीतिबोधाचरणप्रचारणैर्दशाश्चतस्रः प्रणयन्नुपाधिभिः ।
चतुर्दशत्वं कृतवान् कुतः स्वयं न वेद्मि विद्यासु चतुर्दशस्वपि ॥

—*Naisadha Kāvya 14.*

These are the *Vidyās* (विद्या) which teach directly on *Dharma* (धर्म) Four others which deal with other subjects are also sometimes added to the list and the whole referred to as the Eighteen *Vidyās* (अष्टादश विद्याः). It is considered that there is nothing on the face of the earth which is not contained somewhere in these eighteen seats of learning!

These fourteen books are thus the seat both of *Dharma* (धर्म) and *Vidyā* (विद्या) or *Jñāna* (ज्ञान) These are the paths or *Sādhana* (साधन) in Hinduism which lead to the attainment of *Moksa Sāmrājya* (मोक्षसाम्राज्य) or spiritual salvation

The most important of these fourteen scriptural texts are undoubtedly the Vedas They are divided into four classes The *Sadangas* (षडङ्ग) are the main organs of the Vedas as their name indicates The remaining four books, *viz*, *Mīmāmsā*, *Nyāya*, *Purānas* and *Dharma Sāstras* are sometimes spoken of as *Upāngas* (उपाङ्ग) or the co-organs of the Vedas

The Vedas are the most direct among our *Dharma Pramānas* Hence the following aphorism —

धर्मज्ञसमयः प्रमाण वेदाश्च

—*Apastamba Dharma Sūtras.*

Still a Hindu is said to be completely well-versed in our scriptures only when he has studied all these fourteen texts Hence the term *Sāngopānga Vedādhyayana*, (साङ्गोपाङ्गवेदाध्ययन) used in referring to such persons, which

means the "Study of the Vedas along with their *Angas* and *Upāngas*"

Much need not be said here about the Vedas, as most of us come to have, at any rate, a general idea of these, if not during childhood, at least later in life Suffice it merely to mention in this general account that these are grouped under four classes, *viz*, *Rg* (ऋग्), *Yajus* (यजुस्), *Sāma* (साम), *Atharva* (अथर्व) and that they really consist of the following three parts —

(1) the *Samhitā* (संहिता) or *Mantra* (मन्त्र) portion containing the mantras to be chanted while performing the Vedic sacrificial rites,

(2) the *Brāhmanas* (ब्राह्मण) or expositions on the incantations and rituals referred to in the first part, and

(3) the *Āranyaka* (आरण्यक) with the *Upanisads* contained in them, which are the philosophic portions of the Vedas

CHAPTER V

THE VEDAS

We saw in a previous chapter that the seat of Dharma in the Hindu conception consists of the fourteen scriptures, the Vedas, their six *Angas* and the four *Upāngas* The four Vedas are the *Rg*, the *Yajus*, the *Sāma* and the *Atharva*

Needless to say that the fame of the Vedas is unbounded An expression of it is a matter of everyday experience among the Hindus It is a well-known habit among us to honour renowned holy places of sanctity by using their names when specifying the holiness of others For instance, when speaking of holy places one draws the name of Benares as a basis for comparison We say that Vrddhācalam (a place of pilgrimage in South India) is the 'Old Benares', (*Vrddha Kāśī*) Bugga in Chittore district is also known as a Benares Similarly we call a place in the Tinnevelly district Teṉkāśī Likewise in the following Śloka, the poet in stating that Kumbhaghonam is a *Ksetra* holier than Benares, really pays a silent tribute to the unsurpassed sanctity of *Vārānasī* (वाराणसी) —

अन्यक्षेत्रे कृतं पापं पुण्यक्षेत्रे विनश्यति ।
पुण्यक्षेत्रे कृतं पापं वाराणस्यां विनश्यति ॥
वाराणस्यां कृतं पापं कुम्भघोणे विनश्यति ।
कुम्भघोणे कृतं पापं कुम्भघोणे विनश्यति ॥

That Kāśī should be singled out for comparison when the greatness of other places is to be extolled, is itself a tribute to the sanctity of Kāśī, by quoting Benares as an example when speaking about holy places, we add to the greatness of Kāśī Hence, the following verse composed about a hundred years ago —

क्षेत्राणामुत्तमानामपि यदुपमया काऽपि लोके प्रशस्ति
चित्तद्रव्येण मुक्तिक्रयमभिलषतां याऽद्भुता पण्यवीथी ।
साक्षाद्विश्वेश्वरस्य त्रिभुवनमहिता या पुरा राजधानी
रम्या काशी सकाशंभवतु हितकरी भुक्तये मुक्तये नः ॥

—*Mahisa Sataka Vyākhyāna*.

The purport of the above śloka is as follows —'In the holy Bazaar of Benares, the fame of which is extolled by citing it often as an example of sacred *Ksetras*, we can purchase by parting with the money of *Bhakti*, the commodity of *Mukti* Here through the blessings of Śrī Viśveśvara, one gets salvation'

In the same way, whenever any religious or literary composition of excellence is to be appreciatively spoken of, we find the Vedas coming in handy for comparison Let us take, for instance, the Rāmāyana of Vālmīki It is a work of undoubted literary beauty and has a high value among our religious books In every vernacular of India and even in some of the other languages of the world we have an extant rendering of it The Poet, Kālidāsa, has made extensive portions of it the main theme of his *Raghuvamśa* (रघुवंश) The ancient Hindu King, Bhōja, has written his Rāmāyana Cambū Bhavabhūti, the well-known Sanskrit poet, has used part of its theme in his *Uttara Rāma Caritam* (उत्तररामचरित) *Rāmabhadhra Dīksita*, a

great Sanskrit scholar of the south, has produced a play of classic beauty known as *Jānakī Pariṇaya* The Tamil poets Kambar and Arunācala Kavi have rendered Rāmāyana in Tamil in verse and dramatic forms respectively. In many Hindu homes this epic is even read as a regular course of daily worship or *Pārāyana* All this testify amply to the greatness of this hoary epic of ours To bring home to the mind the greatness of such an eminent epic, they have thought it fit to compare it only to the Vedas, as for instance, in the following quotation —

वेदः प्राचेतसादासीत् साक्षाद्रामायणात्मना ।

Similarly the Mahābhārata, the other great epic adorning our religious literature, has also been spoken of in terms of the Veda

भारतः पञ्चमो वेदः ।

The Śrī Vaisnavaites of South India give a very high place of honour to certain devotional songs in Tamil sung by the ancient Vaisnavaite saints (*Āḻvārs*) and known as *Divya Prabandhas* In one place, while attempting to exalt the religious quality of these verses, they have described them as the Vedas in a Tamil rendering Likewise, the classic Tamil work Kuṟal composed about 1,000 years ago has also often been described as a Tamil Veda *

Similarly the works of the Tamil Śaivite Saints (*Nāyaṉmārs*), *viz*, Tēvāram and Tiruvācakam, have also been described as the Tamil or Drāvida Vedas

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*ஆரியமுஞ் செந்தமிழு மாராய்ந் திதனினிது
சீரியதென் றொன்றைச் செப்பரிதால்—ஆரியம்
வேத முடைத்து தமிழ் திருவள்ளுவனா
ரோது குறட்பா வுடைத்து.

—திருவள்ளுவமாலை.

It is also interesting to note here that the Christian Missionaries in the south describe their Gospel as the Satyaveda or the 'Veda of Truth'! These then sufficiently testify to the high esteem in which the Vedas are held in this country and elsewhere It is the custom to praise one religious literature by comparing it with one of the well-known sacred books.

About 5,000 years ago, at the conjunction of the *Dvāparayuga* and the *Kaliyuga*, the Sage Vyāsa is said to have classified the Vedas into four parts This sage is also credited besides this with the authorship of the *Vedānta Sūtras* containing the doctrines of the *Uttara Mīmāmsā* or the Vedānta school of Indian philosoply, the eighteen great Purānas and the Mahābhārata As the Vedas are too extensive to be mastered within the span of a single human life, Vyāsa divided it into four parts with the object that it might be possible for one to study at least one *Śākhā* (शाखा) or branch of it He took care to see that each *Śākhā* contained all that was necessary for one to attain spiritual salvation The four disciples of Vyāsa, *viz*, Sumantu, Baila, Jaimini and Vaiśampāyana, learnt under him these four *Śākhās* of the Vedas—*i e*, *Rg*, *Yajus*, *Sāma* and *Atharva* respectively The whole of the eighteen *purānas* were revealed by Vyāsa to Sūta Purānika from whom these have come down to us

There are many sub-branches in the main *Śākhā* or branch of Rg Veda but of these only one is now extant—*viz*, the *Aitareya Śākhā* (ऐतरेयशाखा) The Yajur Vēda consisted of 101 *Śākhās* but only three of these are now available These are the *Kānva Śākhā* (काण्वशाखा), the *Taittirīya Śākhā* (तैत्तिरीयशाखा) and the *Mādhyandina Śākhā*. (माध्यन्दिनशाखा) The Sāma Veda had a thousand branches

but only two of these have been preserved for us *viz*, the *Gauthma Sākhā* (गौतमशाखा) and the *Talavakāra Sākhā*. The *Sākhās* of the *Atharva Veda* (अथर्ववेद) have been totally lost to us. We have, however, evidences even to-day to show not only that the Atharva Veda, like the other Vedic branches, had its *Sākhās*, but also that there were groups of Brāhmins for whom their study was prescribed. In Utkal or modern Orissa, there are eighteen divisions among the Brāhmins of whom those belonging to one particular group are known as *Atharvanikas*, (आथर्वणिका) which shows that, in the days gone by, these men studied the Veda through its *Atharva* branch.

When Vyāsa classified the Vedas he divided them into 1180 branches of which only eight, including the six detailed above, are now extant.

A *Sākhā* or branch of the Vedas is that compendium of it wherein are contained all the incantations necessary for the performance of the various *Karmas* or Vedic rites enjoined by *Sanātana Dharma* on a human being from his very birth right up to his death. Hence the following definition of it —

एकां शाखामधीत्य श्रोत्रियो भवति ।

In ancient days it was usual for Hindu kings to bestow patronage on religious lore by assigning a whole village to one well-versed in all the Vedic texts of his particular *Sākhā*. The villages so given away were known as *Srotriya* (श्रोत्रिय) villages or those presented to a *Sruta* (श्रुत) or a Vedic pandit. The income from such villages was exempt from the usual land tax. As those who devoted the whole of their lives to the study of the Vedas had no other ostensible means of livelihood, living

was made possible for them through such gifts of land This state of affairs which was primarily responsible for the smooth working of the *Varna Dharma* in our land for ages, exists nowhere else in the world No wonder then that several western scholars whose eyes are opened to the real treasures that lie hidden in our religious scriptures through the activities in foreign lands of noble souls like Swāmi Vivekānanda, have gone into raptures over the beauties of the teachings in these texts! One scholar—Paul Deussen—has even gone to the extent of saying that *Ādi Sankara Bhagavatpādācārya* (आदिशङ्करभगवत्पादाचार्य) was a very god on earth and has even desired a photo of his to be kept at Kāladi, the place of the Great Guru's birth in Malabar!

Each *Sākhā* of the Vedas consists in turn of three parts, as we have already seen, *viz* :—

(1) the *Samhitā* or Mantra portion,

(2) the *Brāhmana* portion and

(3) the *Upanisad* portion

The *Mantras* consist of incantations which are intended to be uttered when the blessing of the particular deity in praise of which they have been written down, is to be invoked As the *mantra* is chanted a *Dravya* (द्रव्य) or a form of material riches such as, for instance, Ghee, is to be offered or thrown into the sacrificial fire As the *Dravya* is offered to the fire, the worshipper should also utter the Sanskrit words "न मम" which mean 'Not Mine,' the idea being that a Sanātanist should dedicate all his worldly belongings to God

The Brāhmana portion of a Vedic *Śākhā* contains elaborate expositions on the various *Karmas* or rituals for which *Mantras* have been composed in the corresponding *Samhitā* (संहिता) portions

The *Mantras* and the *Brāhmanas* form the *Karma Kānda* (कर्मकाण्ड) of the Vedas or that part of the Vedas dealing with actions The *Upanisads* form the concluding portions of the *Śākhās* and are their *Jñāna Kānda* In the same way as the *Karma Kānda* of the Vedas teach us the proper methods of Vedic worship through rituals for attaining worldly benefits, the *Upanisads* teach us the way to attaining oneness with the All-Pervading Soul by dedicating all the benefits accruing from the observance of the rites prescribed in the *Karma Kānda* to God Real truth will dawn on us only by absolute self-denial, as stated in the following quotation —

जन्माद्यस्य यतोऽन्वयादितरतश्चार्थेष्वभिज्ञ स्वराट्
तेने ब्रह्म हृदा य आदिकवये मुह्यन्ति यत्सूरय. ।
तेजोवारिमृदां यथा विनिमयो यत्र त्रिसर्गोऽमृषा
धाम्ना स्वेन सदा निरस्तकुहक सत्य परं धीमहि ॥

—*Srīmad Bhāgavata-I-(1)-I*

Each *Śākhā* has therefore had its *Upanisad* and all the extant *Śākhās* have one *Upanisad* each with the exception of the *Kānvaśākhā* (काण्वशाखा) which has two *Upanisads viz* the *Iśāvāsya* (ईशावास्य) or *Iśopanisad* (ईशोपनिषद्) and the *Brhadāranyakopanisad* (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्) Besides these there are also a large number of *Upanisads* now available the relevant *Śākhās* for which have been lost to us As an example of the latter, may be mentioned the (*Kathōpanisad*) कठोपनिषद् believed by some to belong to the *Rg*

Veda (ऋग्वेद) though it does not form part of the only extant *Śākhā* of that Veda *viz*, the *Aitarēya Śākhā* (ऐतरेयशाखा) Likewise some of the extant *Upanisads* such as the *Kausītakī Brāhmana Upanisad* (कौषीतकीब्राह्मण उपनिषद्) belong to the Atharva Veda, though none of its *Śākhās* at present exists Thus though the Karma portion of the Vedas has largely been allowed to perish, their *Jñāna* (ज्ञान) and *Tattva* (तत्त्व) or philosophical portions have been preserved! Vyāsa simplified our labours by classifying the Vedas into *Śākhās* so that a Dhārmic Hindu might at least study one *Śākhā* in his life-time but now even this is not being done properly

We have evidence that the Vedas were also sometimes known by the names of some of their *Śākhās* For instance there is a work of great antiquity in Tamil literature known as Tolkāppiyam It is supposed to be composed by Trna Dhūmāgni, one of the twelve disciples of the sage, *Agastya* (अगस्त्य) It is said in one of the commentaries on this work that it had seen the light of day even before the great sage, Vyāsa, classified the Vedas under four heads These four Vedas have been enumerated in this work as the *Taittirīya*, the *Bouḻiya*, the *Talavakāra* and *Sāma* We now know, however, that these are only the names of some of the sub-divisions of the four main branches of the Vedas

In the Tamil *Divya Prabandha* we hear of the term Bouḻiya Candoka This is not the name of the entire Vedas, but only of one of its *Śākhās* Even in one of the ancient documents of Malabar we find this name In this part of the country those following the Rg Veda are large in number This gave the clue that the term stood in those days for the main branch, Rg Veda

We derive our knowledge of the material things of this world through our senses This leaves out a vast amount of knowledge which our senses cannot reach and interpret to us We learn some things through the eyes. Other things we hear and certain others are reasoned out. For instance we learn of American news through telegrams in newspapers The Vedas are supposed to enlighten us on such matters as are beyond the perception of the senses

This definition of the Vedas leads us to the peculiar situation in which one is forced to reject certain portions of the same as containing knowledge that could be perceived through other agencies such as our ordinary senses As such portions have no value as supreme authorities, they are described in Hindu religious scriptures as mere *Arthavāda* (अर्थवाद) The doubt is persistent as to whether all the things that we see are of one origin or whether they are different Science in the first instance concluded that the different objects perceptible to the senses are different Later it was found out that the worldly objects can be traced to seventy-two elements Further research will perhaps show that these seventy-two elements have originated from one basic element The rationalists base everything upon knowledge and reason In our country the Hindus declare the oneness as Advaita and the diversity as Dvaita Which of these represents the truth? What do the Vedas speak about? If Dvaita is the Truth a reference to the Vedas is needless We see objects only in the Dvaitic form The Vedas, according to our definition, should speak about what we do not know and deal only with what is not clear to our mind And Advaita is one of the things which we are ordinarily unable to comprehend If, therefore, the Vedas are to tell us anything at all, it should be about the Advaitic doctrine

On looking at the *Karmakānda* part of the Vedas it would seem as though it established the birth of Dvaita In the end they would seem to conclude with Advaita A revelation that could be made known through other sources but which is also contained in the Vedas is known as *Anuvāda* (अनुवाद).

अनुवादोऽवधारिते ।

The above definition also gives a conclusive reply to the very common doubt arising in our minds regarding the acceptability of the Vedas An appeal to reason is often resorted to for a test of the acceptability of the Vedic teachings The Vedas are not for telling us about things within our reasoning power The Vedas containing eternal truth were handed down to us by the great Rsis That which cannot be reasoned, that which the human mind cannot penetrate, that which is beyond the senses—all these form the Vedas

In conclusion it is enjoined that the Brāhmin as the representative of all communities should perform the *Pañca Mahāyajñas* and the *Brahmayajña* compulsorily and, if possible, study at least some parts of the Vedas or, as a last resort, at least chant regularly the *Gāyatrī* which is the quintessence of all Vedic teaching

CHAPTER VI

THE SADANGAS IN GENERAL AND ŚIKSĀ, THE FIRST ANGA IN DETAIL

The *Veda Purusa* has got six organs *Siksā* (शिक्षा) forms his nose, *Vyākarana* (व्याकरण) his mouth, *Kalpa* (कल्प) his hands, *Nirukta* (निरुक्त) his ears, *Chandas* (छन्दस्) his feet and *Jyotisa* (ज्योतिष) his eyes In this figuritive representation the organs for the *Vedāngas* have not been chosen haphazardly, but stand for them quite appropriately To understand the full meaning of the Vedas the Brahmin should learn the six *angas* Take for instance, *Jyotisa*, which is supposed to be the eye of the *Veda Purusa* or his *Netrasthāna* (नेत्रस्थान) In the same way as our eyes help us in seeing the objects beyond us, *Jyotisa* enables us to locate planets and stars at any required future date with a remarkable exactitude

Likewise, *Vyākarana* is supposed to be the mouth of the *Veda Purusa*. It being the grammar of the language in which the *Vedas* are written, whoever has not got a knowledge of it, can only prattle in that language

The use of these *Sadangas*, therefore, lies in that they enable the *Vedas*, the main scriptures, being correctly interpreted and followed On the brahmin, however, it is enjoined that he should first learn the *Vedas* and the *Sāstras* (शास्त्र) by rote without probing into the why and the wherefore of things and then only these *Angas*, so as to be able to understand the teachings of the *Vedas* Hence the following quotation —

ब्राह्मणेन निष्कारणो धर्मः षडङ्गो वेदोऽध्येयो ज्ञेयश्च ।

In the old days, the brāhmins used to be well-versed in all these six *Angas*. The following historical evidence in the shape of stone and copper inscriptions amply testifies to it.

The custom in those days was to record deeds of gift by inscriptions in stones and copper. The temple walls there corresponded, so to say, to the modern Sub-Registrar's Office! A reference to this custom still lingers in the official designation of one of the state officials of Travancore. This particular official is known in their language as the "*Tirumandira Ōlai*", which roughly means the "Court scribe". His principal duty is to record in black and white all the orders of the Mahārāja or the ruler of the State. In those days, whenever some one made a gift of, say, some immovable property to a religious or charitable institution, the king, after duly accepting it, caused his orders to be intimated to the party concerned through this "*Tirumandira Ōlai*". In the draft of the intimation this official concluded by adding the sentence*:—

"You may have this deed further confirmed by suitably inscribing it in copper and in stone."

This injunction of the King used to be sent to the *Brāhmana Sabhā* (ब्राह्मणसभा) of the respective village the members of which would have the deed aptly described in an inscription in the walls of the village temple.

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* The original sentence in Tamil, transliterated, would read as follows:—

"Kallilum Sembilum Vettikkolluka"

The above shows that in every village in those days there was a Brāhmana Sabhā. All the Brāhmins of the village, well-versed in the Vedas, could become members of these societies. The election to the managing committees of these associations took place through a system of casting lots. There were detailed instructions about the eligibility and non-eligibility of membership to these committees. These details are now available to us through an inscription that has been found at Uttaramērūr, a place in South India.

In order to be able to exercise its civic functions properly, this Sabhā appears to have been divided into several branches, each with its allotted portfolio, such as tax collection, distribution of water etc. All the orders passed by these Sabhās are signed by the members party to it and these signatures have been preserved for us in the extant copper and other inscriptions. One thing that strikes us prominently in these is the way in which many of these names are qualified by the addition of titular epithets such as *Sadangavi* and *Satkarmaniratan*, etc. The first of these is a corruption for the Sanskrit term, *Sadangavid* (षडङ्गविद्), which means one who is well-versed in the six *Vedāngas*.

The above is sufficient proof of the fact that the Brāhmins of those good old days were learned not only in the Vedas, but also in these six *Angas*.

With this preliminary account of the Sadangas in general, we may now proceed to a detailed consideration of these.

Śikṣā (शिक्षा)

Sikṣā, the first of these *Angas*, may be likened to orthography in the modern grammar of any

language It determines the lengths of vowel and consonant sounds and deals with similar other details relating to pronunciation and the alphabets It also tells us about the derivation or origin of the various letters of the alphabet In other words, it describes the process of producing the various alphabetical sounds and outlines the efforts required for the same.

The Vedas have certain definite *Svaras* (स्वरा) with which alone they should be chanted It the proper *Svaras* and pronunciations are not applied, the desired effects will not be secured Nay, such improper chantings may even result in disastrous consequences

मन्त्रो हीन स्वरतो वर्णतो वा
मिथ्याप्रयुक्तो न तमर्थमाह ।
स वाग्वज्रो यजमान हिनस्ति
यथेन्द्रशत्रु स्वरतोऽपराधात् ॥

The story is told of one *Tvastā* performing a *Homa* with a particular end in view, which resulted in his coming to grief because of a single mistake in *Svara*[1]

There are 51 letters in the Sanskrit alphabet and these are collectively known as *Mātrkā* The idea is that these represent *Ambāl* or *Śakti* The different letters in the alphabet are said to be the various organs of *Śakti* Though there are an infinite number of sounds produced in this Universe, these 51 have been selected as being those of which alone the Vedas have been composed

Śiksā, as has been already said, forms the nasal organ of the *Veda Purusa* It therefore forms, as it were, the "very breath of his existence'[1]

CHAPTER VII

VYĀKARANA—THE SECOND AMONG THE SADANGAS

Vyākarana, the second of the *Veda Angas* forms the mouth of the personified *Veda Purusa* There have been many *Vyākaranas* or grammars for Sanskrit, the language of the Vedas, but the one principally in vogue is that compiled by the Sage, Pānini There is a *Vārttika*(वार्त्तिक) or gloss on this by the Sage, Vararuci (वररुचि). The main commentary on Pānini's (पाणिनि) *Vyākarana* is however the *Mahā Bhāsya* of Sage, Patañjali (पतञ्जलि). These three, *viz* ,

(1) Pānini's *Vyākarna Sūtras*

(2) Vararuci's *Vārttika*, and

(3) Patañjali's *Mahā Bhāsya*, form the main works or *Śāstras* on *Vyākarana*

There is just one difference between these *Śāstras* on *Vyākarana* and the *Śāstras* dealing with other subjects In *Vyākarana* the original *Śāstras* on which the *Vārttika* and the *Bhāsya* are elaborations, are given less importance than the commentaries, and even among the latter, the *Bhāsya* is shown greater respect than the *Vārttika* The exact reverse is the case with the other *Śāstras*

In one classification of our religious texts, the *Śāstras* are stated to be six in number *Vyākarana*

is found to be one of these. Four of these six *Śāstras* are said to be the more important ones—*viz.*, *Tarka* (तर्क), *Mīmāmsā* (मीमांसा), *Vyākarana* (व्याकरण) and *Vedānta* (वेदान्त). Of these also *Vyākarana* is seen to form one. We have already seen that *Vyākarana* is given a place among the *Sad Vedāngas*. All these sufficiently testify to the importance of this branch of human knowledge.

Vyākarana proper consists of *Sūtras* or brief aphorisms, each consisting of but a few words pithily arranged, in accordance with the following derivation of the term, *Sūtra* —

सूचनात् सूत्रम् ।

Every *Śāstra* has a *Bhāsya* or commentary on it. Each of these is distinguished from the other commentaries by the addition to its name of the name of the original *Śāstra* or work which it expounds. For example, the *Bhāsyas* of the three great *Ācāryas* on the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Bhagavad Gītā* are known respectively, as the *Sūtra Bhāsya* and the *Gītā Bhāsya* (गीताभाष्य). Patañjali's *Bhāsya* on Pānini's grammar on the other hand, is known by the unique name of *Mahā Bhāsya* or 'the great *Bhāsya*'. This sufficiently indicates the high quality of his exposition on the subject of *Vyākarana*.

In Śaivaite temples in South India there used to be a particular *Mandapa* (मण्डप) or pillared hall known as the *Vyākarana Dāna Mandapa* (also as *Vākkanikkum Mantapam*—a corrupt form of this in Tamil). One such exists even to this day in the famous temple at Tiruvorriyūr, a suburb of the city of Madras. Such structures also exist in a number of other less known temples in the

Cola Deśa (चोलदेश) (*i.e*, the modern districts of South Arcot, Tanjore and Trichinopoly in Madras Presidency)

One of the *Vyākarana Śāstras* now widely in usage is the *Siddhānta Kaumudī* (सिद्धान्तकौमुदी) written about 350 years ago by one Bhattoji Dīksita, a desciple of the renowned Appayya Dīksita of Adayappalam in South India This work is of the nature of a c
Pānini's *Vyākarana Sūtras*

CHAPTER VIII

CHANDAS — THE THIRD VEDĀNGA

Chandas, the third *Vedānga*, is the foot of the *Veda Purusa* Each *mantra* in the *samhitā* portion of the Vedas has a particular *Rsi*, a definite *Chandas*, and a particular *Devatā* associated with it The person chanting the *mantra* touches with his fingers the scalp of his head, while pronouncing the name of the *Rsi*, the tip of his nose, while naming the *Chandas*, and his breast (representing his heart—the *Hrdayasthāna*), while uttering the name of the *Devatā* These three stand, respectively, for —

(*i*) the particular sage or seer through whom the Vedic *mantra* was first revealed to us,

(*ii*) the metre in which the verse of the *mantra* is set, and

(*iii*) the particular deity whose blessing the chanting of the *mantra* invokes

Chandas, therefore, corresponds to Prosody in English Grammar, but is applied only to the versifications occurring in the Vedas The corresponding term used while referring to the metrical compositions of the non-vedic works in Sanskrit is *śloka* *Chandas* is also sometimes spoken of as *Padya* in Sanskrit

Chandas consists, naturally, of different types of metrical builds The commonest of these is the *Anustup* metre Most of the *ślokas* of which the

Purānas and Vālmīki's Rāmāyana are composed are written in this *Anustup Chandas*

We saw under *Siksā* that it forms the main preservative for the letters of the alphabet Similarly it is the *chandas* which protects the *śabda* or the various sounds denoted by these letters It is the science of *chandas* that has made it possible for the Vedas to have come down to us intact in all their pristine purity without being tainted by interpolations which the passage of time invariably brings about

To return to the *Rsi*, the *chandas*, and the *devatā* associated with the *mantras* It was said at the outset that each *mantra* has a *Rsi* or sage whose name is connected with it This does not mean that the *mantra* was composed by that particular *Rsi*. These seers have been described in our religious literature as *mantra Drastās* or those who have 'seen' these *mantras* In other words it is through these great men that the *mantras* have been revealed or made known to us by the Almighty The significance of our touching the scalp while uttering the names of the *Rsis* lies in the fact that, by doing so, we offer our head for their holy feet to be placed upon

Similar is the significance in our touching the nose tip while naming the *chandas* of the *mantra* Protecting, as it does, the *Sabda* or the sound of the *mantra, chandas* forms, as it were, its very life- breath It is to indicate this that we touch the nose, the organ through which our own *Prāna* or vital air passes

While chanting the *mantra,* the deity worshipped by it should be deeply contemplated upon As it is in the heart that we try to concentrate our thoughts of the deity,

we touch the *hrdayasthāna*, while naming the *devatā* of the *mantra*

Chandas forms the main support for the *mantra* forming, as it does, its feet or the chief prop Hence the saying—

छन्द पादौ वेदस्य ।

As we cannot stand without the support of our legs and feet, even so the *mantras* cannot be supported except by their feet which are the various *chandases* in which they are cast

The main work on *chandas* is the compilation, *Chandas Sūtras*, whose author is one Pingala Nāda It is from this work that we learn the metrical builds of the various portions of the Vedas and of the millions of *ślokas* composing the rest of the literature in sanskrit

CHAPTER IX

NIRUKTA—THE FOURTH VEDĀNGA

Nirukta, the fourth *Vedānga*, is the dictionary of the Vedas In sanskrit it is known as the *Kośa* A well-known dictionary extant in that language is the *Amara Kośa* Some dictionaries of that language are also known by the name of *Nighantu* (निघण्टु)

Nirukta forms the ear or the *Srotrasthāna* (श्रोत्रस्थान) of the *Veda Purusa* It explains the meanings of all hard words occurring in the Vedas *Nirukta*, confining as it does its attention to the Vedas, is also referred to as the *Veda Nighantu* It not only gives the meaning of these words but also their derivation

We saw under *Siksā* that though there have been many different *Siksā* works for the language of the Vedas, (as many as thirty have been described as having existed), the one mostly in use is that by the sage, Yājña-valkya Similarly there have been many different *Vyākaranas* also In a common classification, nine of these works are frequently enumerated as the *nava vyākaranas* and it is said that these nine works were first learnt by Hanumān from the Sun-God, Sūrya One of these nine *Granthas* is said to be the *Vyākarana*, *Aindra* (ऐन्द्र), supposed to be composed by Indra, the king of the *devas*, and said to form the original on which the ancient Tamil grammar, Tolkāppiyam was based In spite of the existence of these works on grammar, the one largest in use is the *Vyākarana* of Pānini Likewise

Nirukta works are also many in number, but the commonest of these is that by Yāska.

It was stated above that the *Nirukta* dictionaries do not stop with giving the mere meaning of the various words, but also give derivations for them and explain their use and aptness in the various contexts. To take some examples:—

The word *Hrdaya*, which means the 'heart,' is said to be made up of the two words, '*Hrdi*' and '*Ayam*' which, taken together, mean 'that in which He exists'. Hence the heart is considered to be the place in the human body wherein the Lord Almighty is supposed to reside. The *Vyākarana Śāstras* deal with *Dhātus* or roots (for both nouns and verbs in Sanskrit, unlike in English, where we have roots only among verbs) and *Pratyayas* or suffixes. *Nirukta* explains and derives the words in the Vedas with the aid of the rules in the *Vyākarana Śāstras* relating to the *dhātu* and *pratyaya* combinations.

A study of *Nirukta* also throws abundant light on the fact that most of the words in the other languages of the world have been derived in the ancient past from Sanskrit *dhātus* or roots. As instances of these may be cited the following striking cases.

The English word 'hour' from *Horā*' in Sanskrit (*c f* the expressions, *Horā Śāstra* and *Ahorātra*) and the English word 'heart' from '*Hrd*' in Sanskrit are well-known examples.

The English word, 'another,' from *Anyatara* in Sanskrit is another instance of this. Thus the *Nirukta* of Sanskrit is not merely the dictionary, pure and simple, of the English and the other western languages, but corresponds more or less to the philological works in these languages.

CHAPTER X

JYOTISA—THE FIFTH VEDĀNGA

Jyotisa, the fifth *Vedānga*, forms the *Veda Purusa's* eyes or his *Netrasthāna* The *Jyotisa Śāstra* consists of three parts or *Skandhas* and, on that account, *Jyotisa* is also sometimes known as the *Skandha-trayātmakam* As in the case of the other *Vedānga Śāstras*, the *Śāstras* devoted to *Jyotisa* are also many in number For instance, the sages, Garga, Nārada and Parāśara have given to the world many *Samhitās* or *Mantra* collections which deal with the subject of *Jyotisa* The Sun-God, Sūrya, is said to have taken human form and taught Maya, the carpenter of the Asuras, one particular work on this *Vedānga* This work or *Grantha* is known as the Sūryasiddhānta

Besides the above whose authorship is ascribed to sages and seers and to *Devatās*, there are also works on *Jyotisa* which are admittedly human compositions The following are a few of the latter class —

(i) The works of Varāhamihira

(ii) The works of Āryabhatta

(iii) The works of Bhāskarācārya

These three were works written in the ancient past

(iv) *Siddhānta Kaustubha*, a comparatively recent work written by one Sundareśa Srouti in South India, of which only three quarters are said to be now available and of which no portion has, as yet, gone into print

It was said at the outset that *Jyotisa* has three main divisions known as its three *Skandhas* (The word *Skandha* in Sanskrit means 'the main branch of a tree') On this account the title of *Triskandha Bhāskara* is sometimes conferred on pandits who are well-versed in the *Jyotisa Śāstras*

These three divisions of *Jyotisa* are —

(i) the *Siddhānta Skandha*,
(ii) the *Horā Skandha* and
(iii) the *Samhitā Skandha*

The branches of modern mathematics, *viz* arithmetic, trigonometry, geometry and algebra are all portions of the *Siddhānta Skandha*, the first sub-division of *Jyotisa*

Of these the part corresponding to arithmetic is known as the *Vyakta Ganita* or the science of 'known or definite' numbers The four fundamental operations in numbers, *viz*, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, all belong to this branch The opposite of this is algebra or *Avyakta Ganita* which deals with quantities of 'unknown' values such as those denoted by the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, *x*, *y*, *z* etc, used in this branch The modern Geometry is the *Ksetra Ganita* of our *Jyotisa Śāstras* and its name is derived from the two Sanskrit words, '*Jyā*' meaning 'the earth' and '*Miti*' meaning 'measurement' Similarly the word geography has also a Sanskrit origin A few of the other divisions of the *Ganita Śāstra* are the *Rekhā Ganita*, the *Kūta*, the *Angapāśa* etc One branch of *Siddhānta Skandha* known as *Samīkarana* consists in solving problems in *Avykta* or 'unknowns' with the aid of certain given *Vyaktas* or 'knowns' Thus, it corresponds to 'Equations' in modern algebra!

The branch of *Jyotisa* known as *Siddhānta Skandha* finds its fullest use in *Kalpa*, the sixth *Vedānga*. The *Śāstras* on this Vedic organ are in the shape of *Sūtras* known as *Sulba Sūtras* (शुल्ब) compiled by great seers or *Maharsis*. A few of them are the *Āpastamaba Sūtras*, and the *Āśvalāyana Sūtras*. In these *Sūtras*, among other things, we find detailed instructions about the actual method of performing the Vedic *Yajñas* or sacrificial rites. One of the things described in this part of the *Sulba Sūtras* is known as *Cayanam* (चयनम्) which is the name given to the structure which has to be first put up for the *Yajña* to be performed on it. One such structure is known as the *Garudākrti*. These *Sūtras* contain information such as the number of bricks that would be required to build up a brick kiln of a desired size, the manner of arranging the bricks in the kiln etc. Most of these, therefore, partake of the nature of mathematical problems. It is said that until about 20 or 30 years ago a certain problem in equations given in the *Āpastamba Sulba Sūtras* was defying solution, and that there are still a number of unsolved equations in these *Sūtras*.

The science of 'known' quantities or *vyakta ganita viz*—arithmetic—is also known as the *Bīja Ganita*. Two well-known works of some antiquity on arithmetic are the *Līlāvatī* and the *Siddhānta Śiromani* of Bhāskarācārya who lived about 800 years ago.

We learn from an inscription that has appeared in the *Prācīna Lekha Mālā* series that was referred to in a previous chapter, that one *Singhana*, a king who ruled over Gujerat, even made gifts of land for propagating the knowledge of *Jyotisa* contained in the works of Bhāskarācārya. No wonder that, thanks to such patronage

all the twelve books in Sanskrit on geometry or *ksetra-ganita* have been preserved intact, while of the corresponding books of Euclid in the western languages, books seven to ten are said to be lost!

The mathematician, Varāha Mihira, belonged to a much older age than Bhāskarācārya He is said to have lived about 1,800 years ago Two of his better-known works are the *Brhadsamhitā* and the *Brhad Jātaka* Two other works in Sanskrit on *Jyotisa* are —

(i) the *Aryabhatta Siddhānta* by Āryabhatta which forms the basis of the calculations adopted in the *Vākya* almanac in use in some parts of South India and

(ii) the *Sūrya Siddhānta* which the *Siddhānta* almanac in force in the Telugu Districts of South India is said to follow

All these *Ganita Śāstras* are, in the final analysis, only treatises on the positions, from time to time, and the movements of planets and stars in the firmament

Jyotisa or Hindu astronomy including astrology recognises nine planets or *Grahas*, *viz*, Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn, and, in addition, two planets which are only the shadows of the Sun and the Moon and which, therefore, have no independent existence and movements These *Chāyā Grahas*, as they are called meaning the 'shadow planets,—are Rāhu and Ketu Being only shadows their movements are the exact opposite of those of the Sun and the Moon

Hindu astrology also recognises the existence of stars besides the bodies described above It agrees with modern European astronomy in the view that the twinkling of the star as against the fixed light of the planets is one of the

factors with the aid of which we can tell the one from the other in the sky It further recognises that the Sun also displays this motion of the stars while looked at with the naked eye, and therefore contains evidence of the real nature of the Sun being a star and not a planet, having been known to our ancients

We have reason to believe that our forefathers were aware of the spectral phenomenon displayed by Sun's light One of the many names of the Sun-God in Sanskrit literature is the *Saptāśva* This term has been taken by some as meaning the 'seven-horsed,' while others hold that it means the 'horse with the seven names' The word, *aśvā*, in Sanskrit, besides meaning a horse, also means a 'ray of light' Hence the correct meaning of the expression, *Saptāśva*, would appear to be that the Sun's rays, though seemingly of one colour, are really made up of seven different colours—which is exactly indicative of the phonomenon of the solar spectrum In support of this contention we have the following sentence in the Vedas —

एको अश्वो वहति सप्तनामा —*Taittirīya Aranyaka*

Both stars and planets rise in the east and set in the west, but the latter show an eastward motion daily, so that their risings and settings vary from day to day It is essentially about these movements that the *Jyotisa Śāstras* deal

It is one of the beliefs of the Hindus that the vicissitudes of men on earth are subject to the influences of heavenly bodies such as planets and stars That part of *Jyotisa Śāstras* wherein the *maharsis* of old have recorded for us the effect on man and his worldly happiness of the various planetary positions is known as the *Horā Skandha*.

The beliefs prevalent among the Hindus regarding the happiness and misery to which mankind is heir, are bewilderingly varied The Hindu doctor's one explanation for all these ills is a disturbance in the balance between the various 'humours' (*Dhātus*) in the human body The magician or *māntrika* ascribes these to the evil influences of spirits To the astrologer or *Jyotisika* a solution should be sought for in the varying planetary positions in the firmament The *Dharma Śāstras* say that these are the results of past deeds or *Karmas* The psychologist, on the other hand, puts it down to some sort of mental aberration

Sometimes it is even said that the sorrows of one individual are the result of the past *Karma* of another being, as in the saying that the sins of the father are visited on the sons For instance, when a child gets sick, it is put down to the bad deeds in their past births of the parents—quite a tenable view in consideration of the fact that the parents, having to attend on the ailing child, themselves share to a large extent the sufferings of the child!

Which of these bewilderingly varied views is ultimately the correct one? There is some truth in every one of these explanations, which are only the various ways in which the real truth is brought home to us We find, for instance, that on a rainy day the ground gets wet, frogs gather by the roadside and croak, locusts appear and several other things happen because of the rain Similarly, we come across several evidences of the operation of the law of *karma*, each of which is only an evidence, but not the ultimate cause These seemingly divergent evidences are really interconnected It is past *karma* that brings about the mental aberration, the planetary disturbances, the

'want of balance between the bodily humours', the 'influences of evil spirits', etc, to which we saw the disease being ascribed in the previous paragraph It is in helping us to determine all these results of our past *karma* in our present life, that the calculations given in the *Jyotisa Śāstras* find their use

The following is an enumeration of some of the several topics dealt with in the *Samhitā Skandha* part of the *Jyotisa Śāstras* —

(i) means of determining, with the aid of external evidences, the course of sub-soil and underground water,

(ii) methods of manufacture of fragrant and essential oils,

(iii) detailed rules and calculations for construction of houses,

(iv) the science of good and bad omens through the medium of bird agencies (*Śakunas*), and

(v) omens through other happenings (*Nimittas*).

Varāhamihira is also the author of a work on *Jyotisa* known as *Brhad Samhitā*

We commonly believe that the phenomenon of Gravitation was first discovered by Newton and that it is one of the heritages that have come to us as a result of Western contact On the other hand, in '*Sūrya Siddhānta*', one of the oldest *Granthas* on *Jyotisa*, this phenomenon is referred to even in the very first verse as the cause of the earth being held in its place in the Universe The same reference is also contained in *Śankara's Bhāsya* of *Praśnopanisad* After setting forth the distinction between *Prāna*, the upward force, and *Apāna*, the downward force, the

great Ācārya says in that work that matter or *Prakṛti* possesses the latter or the gravitational force Our hoary religious texts contain many a conception of a like nature for which, due to sheer ignorance, we give credit to works of much later dates produced by other races in other countries For instance, we have already shown in the foregoing paragraphs that the branches of modern mathematics are found to have been the subject matter of treatises in several of our ancient *Jyotisa Granthas*.

Our *Jyotisa Śāstras* say that at the beginning of every *Kalpa*—a Hindu measure of time equivalent, in length, to one-seventh of the life-time of Brahmā, more details of which are given elsewhere in this chapter—all the planets are situated in a line with one another Due to differences in the velocities of their motion, they get in course of time into varying positions in relation to one another, until, at the end of that particular *Kalpa*, they again come to lie in a line as in the beginning

All the time-notations mentioned in the *Sankalpamantra* with which, always, a Hindu starts his *Samskāras* or Vedic rituals, really belong to the domain of *Jyotisa Śāstra*

It is said somewhere in these *Śāstras* that Brahmā, the Creator, first created the world and, all the time, was chanting the four Vedas through his four faces This statement throws important light on a religious controversy regarding the relative antiquity of God and the Vedas

There are plenty of references in our religious literature which go to show that both the Vedas and the Īśvara, are without a beginning or *Anādi*. Hence it is that nowhere is it stated that the Vedas were composed by God, for, in that case, we would have a definite origin ascribed to them

It has been said in one place in the *Bhāsya* of *Sankara* on the *Brahma Sūtras* that Īśvara is the root-cause of the Vedas This would, on the face of it, appear to suppose that the Vedas have an origin and that in Īśvara This is however at once denied by the explanation which follows *viz* that the Vedas, forming as they do, the very life-breath of Īśvara, could as well be described as the root cause of Him as without the air which a man breathes, he cannot exist! This conception is supported by the following reference to it in a Śloka by Vidyāranya composed in praise of his guru Vidyātīrtha —

यस्य निःश्वसितं वेदा यो वेदेभ्योऽखिलं जगत् ।
निर्ममे तमहं वन्दे विद्यातीर्थं महेश्वरम् ॥

The Vedic sounds or *Veda Śabdas* are said to be infinite in number When it is said that the *Vedas* are limitless as in the following line occurring in the *Taittirīya Brāhmana*, अनन्ता वै वेदा , it is only another way of stating this truth about the *Veda Śabdas* There is a good story illustrating this truth. The sage, Bharadvāja, had spent a long period of his life equal to three human life-times in the study of the Vedas when God appeared to him and, offering a fourth life-time, asked him how he would spend it He said that he would devote it to a further stud of the Vedas Lord Almighty, wishing to test the mind of the great sage, caused three large mountain blocks to appear before him and said that the Vedas so far learnt by him during all these years bore the same relation to the number of Vedas he had yet to learn as a handful of sod did to those three big mountain blocks By using this simile, Lord Parmeśvara merely intended to demonstrate to the world the infinitude of the Vedas.

As soon as Brahmā was created in the beginning of creation, the Vedic sound appeared in his heart These *Śabdas* (शब्द) pointed to him the way to proceed with the creation of other beings To him all the Vedic *Śabdas* were audible To our ancient *Rsis* with their infinitely greater powers than ourselves, only a part of what was heard by Brahmā was made known The Vedic *Śabdas* thus heard by these seers of yore through their wonderfully minute ears (*Divya Śrotras*) form the Vedas available to the human world

Brahmā is said to live a hundred years, but these are not our human years of 365 days each, but are very much longer periods, as will presently be described His lifetime is followed by 100 years in the same reckoning of quietitude or rest It is this period of rest that is described as the *pralaya*, a crude Western synonym of which is the deluge

The hundred years of Brahmā are also spoken of as a *Param* Half this period is a *Parārdha* In some Indian reckonings the number denoting the period of time, *Parārdha*, is also considered as infinity Hence, the Sanskrit saying, एकाद्विपरार्धपयन्त, which corresponds to our saying in English 'from one to infinity'

Brahmā's life-time of his 100 years is supposed to be divided into seven parts known as *Kalpas* Our present Brahmā is said to have completed three *kalpas* and is now in the fourth *Kalpa* which is known as the *Svetavarāha-kalpa* The one immediately preceding it was the *Laksmī Kalpa*

Let us now try to have an idea of the length of Brahmā's life 43,20,000 human years form a *Caturyuga* or a single collection of our four *yugas* or Ages *viz* the *Krta*, the *Tretā*. the *Dvāpara* and the *Kali* Within these *Catur-*

yugas themselves the following are the relative lengths of the four components of the Quadrette

2 Kaliyugas = 1 Dvāparayuga

3 Kaliyugas = 1 Tretāyuga

4 Kaliyugas = 1 Krtayuga

Thus ten *Kaliyugas* are equal to one *Caturyuga* or a complete quadrette of 43,20,000 human years and 1,000 such *Caturyugas* make up one half of a day in Brahmā's life *viz* the *day* An equal number forming his night, a whole day in his life-time is composed of 8,64,00,00,000 human years 365 such days form one year of Brahmā and his life-time, as already stated, consists of 100 such years The age of a Brahmā is also the age of the universe created by him In addition to the *Mahāpralaya* which occurs at the very close of his life-time, there are minor or *Avāntara Pralayas* during each of his nights

Each day-time of Brahmā (*i e* every 4,32,00,00,000 human years) is said to consist of 14 *Manvantaras* Each such *Manvantara* has a Manu as the law-giver to make things orderly The one we live in is said to be the seventh *Manvantara* of the present Brahmā The Manu for this *Manvantara* is known as the *Vaivasvatamanu* and is the first King of the Solar Dynasty (the *Sūrya Vamśa*)

It is interesting to mention here that modern science also has attempted a calculation, of a sort, of the age of this Universe The Sun is supposed to be getting cooler day by day and the rate at which this cooling proceeds is made the basis of the calculation The age of the universe arrived at as a result of this calculation is found to agree, roughly, with the length of the period intervening between two successive Hindu *Avāntarapralayas*

Each *Manvantara* consists of seventy-one *Caturyugas* The particular *Caturyuga* or quadrette of the present *Vaivasvatamanvantara* is the 28th All these wonderfully minute time measures are contained in our *Sankalpa Mantras*

A high degree of accuracy in predicting the time of occurrence of natural phenomena was possessed by our ancients who were well-versed in the *Jyotisa Śāstras* One important difference between *Jyotisas* and those who had specialised in the other *Śāstras* is that the former have actually to demonstrate their knowledge with the aid of physical experiments, *Jyotisa* being, so to say, a demonstrable science, (Whence the definition—प्रत्यक्ष ज्योतिष शास्त्रम्) whereas, in the latter case, it is very often a matter of exposition and display of learning

CHAPTER XI

KALPA—THE SIXTH VEDĀṄGA

Kalpa, the sixth of the *Vedāṅgas*, forms the arm of the *Vedapuruṣa*. It is this *aṅga* or organ which enables a Hindu to perform actions.

What do we do after obtaining a thorough knowledge of the Vedas and its *aṅgas* up to *Jyotiṣa*? We should attempt to put them to use by engaging ourselves in performing the *Karmas* or rites mentioned in the Vedas, as a result of which we shall be able to wipe out our sins. We must preforce gather the necessary *dravyas* for performing these rites and seek a house in which to do them. *Kalpa* is that branch of knowledge dealing with these and similar other details.

Kalpa Śāstras have had many *Ṛṣis* for their authors. The particular *Kalpa Śāstras* which are intended to be followed by the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Vedins* (of south India) have been composed by Āpastamba, Bodhāyana, Vaikhānasa, Satyāṣāḍha, Bharadvāja, and Agniveśa. The author of the *Ṛg* Vedic *Kalpa Śāstras* is the sage Āśvalāyana. The *Śukla Yajur Veda* has two branches and their *Kalpa Śāstrakāra* is the sage, Kātyāyana. The *Kalpa Śāstras* of the *Gautama Śākhā* of *Sāma Veda* have been composed by Drāhyāyana, whereas Jaimini is the author of the *Kalpa Śāstras* followed by the *Talavakāra Śākhā* of *Sāma-Veda*.

The *Kalpa Śāstras* of each of these *Śākhās* is again made up of two parts *viz.*, the *Gṛhya Śāstras* and the

Srouta Śāstras The former deal with all the rites one has to perform beginning from one's birth right up to one's death The funeral obsequies, which are essentially a rite in which one's own body is supposed to be the *Dravya* or material wealth offered to the fire, also come under the purview of this *Gṛhya* part of the *Kalpa Śāstras*

The *Gṛhya Śāstras* deal with forty rites or *Samskāras* and with the practising of eight cardinal virtues A few of the former are enumerated below —

Garbhādhāna, *Pumsavana*, *Sīmanta*, *Jātakarma*, *Nāmakarana*, *Annaprāśana*, *Coula*, *Upanayana*, *Vivāha*, *Agnihotra*, the seven *Soma Yajñas*, and *Antyesti* or the final rites at the funeral pyre

The eight virtues dealt with in *Kalpa* are *Dayā* or mercy, endurance, absence of envy and jealousy, cleanliness of body and mind, elimination of obstinacy, gentleness of mind, liberality and desirelessness

The vedic rites or rituals may fundamentally be classified under two heads, *viz*, *Agnihotras* and *Yajñas* The former are done in dwelling houses and the latter, in specially erected pandals or *Śālās* The rites mentioned in the *Srouta Śāstras* belong to the latter group.

There is a custom lingering in us of describing ourselves as the followers of the particular *Kalpa Śāstras* in accordance with which we have been performing the Vedic rites These *Śāstras* happen largely to belong to the *Srouta* type, which is indicative of the fact that, in the days gone by, unlike in the present day, great prominence was given to the *Srouta* and not the *Gṛhya* rites For instance, the Sāmavedins describe themselves as the followers of the *Sūtras* composed by *Drāhyāyana*, but the *Drāhyāyana Sūtras* are of the *Srouta* class!

In the old days there were a number of men who were described is *Prati Vasanta Somayājis* which meant that they performed a *Soma Yajña* every spring It is said that, in those days, a man's annual income sufficed for his expenses for three years (यस्य त्रय·) and the surplus was devoted to the performance of these good deeds

That part of *Kalpa Śāstras* which deals with the structures known as *Cayanas* on which the various *Yajñas* are to be performed is known as the *Sulbasūtra*

All the *Yāgas* and *Yajñas* from the common *Soma Yāga* right up to the *Aśvamedha Yajña* of Kings are to be performed with the help of the *mantras* taken from all the three Vedas, *Rg*, *Yajus*, and *Sāma* The Principal man who performs the *Yajña* is known as the *Yajamāna* or the master of the ceremonies His assistants or the *Rtviks* are the priests who, in return for their services, receive *Daksinās* or fees from the master These *Rtviks* or officiating priests are of three kinds, the *Hotā* or the one chanting the Rg Vedic *mantras*, the *Adhvaryu* or the chanter of *Yajur-Veda* and the *Udgātr*, the person in charge of the incantations from the *Sāma-Veda*

The *Sulbasūtras* are themselves divided into two parts *viz*, the *Sāmānya* or ordinary *Sūtras* and the *Viśesa* or the special *Sūtras* *Hiranyakeśa* is one of the authors of the *Sulbasūtras* The present day *Srouta Karmas* of South India are conducted according to the prescription of one *Indapillai*, known as the *Indapillai Prayoga*

CHAPTER XII

THE UPĀNGAS IN GENERAL AND MĪMĀMSĀ IN DETAIL

Next in importance to the organs of the Vedas, their *Angas*, (अङ्ग) come their co-organs, the *Upāngas*, (उपाङ्ग) the latter bearing the same relationship to the former as the Vice-President of a gathering does to its President These co-organs or *Upāngas* are four in number and are, respectively—

(i) *Mīmāmsā* (मीमांसा),

(ii) *Nyāya* (न्याय),

(iii) the *Purānas* (पुराण) and,

(iv) the *Dharma Śāstras* (धर्मशास्त्र)

The first of these *Upāngas* is *Mīmāmsā*

The word *Mīmāmsā* is formed by the combination of the root or *Dhātu* (धातु) *Mān* and the suffix or *Pratyaya* (प्रत्यय) '*San*' and means 'enquiry into good things'

Mīmāṁsā consists of two parts, the *Pūrva* and the *Uttara Mīmāmsā*

Our *Śāstras* or original works are generally in the shape of short, pithy, versical statements known as *Sūtras* Being very brief, they are generally beyond the comprehension of most of their readers and would, hence, have elaborate commentaries or *Bhāsyas* and other treatises of a similar nature such as glosses or *Vārttikas*, written on them

The author of the *Sūtras* is generally a *Ṛṣi* or an ancient Hindu Seer on whom divine wisdom is supposed to have dawned The author of the *Sūtras* on *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* is the sage, Jaimini The *Bhāṣyakāra* or commentator on these *Sūtras* is one Śabara Svāmī Kumārila Bhatta, the well-known *Mīmāṃsaka* (follower of *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* and contemporary of *Ādi Sankarācārya*), who is supposed to be an incarnation of Lord Kumāra (Kārttikeya of Northern India), is the author of the *Vārttika* on these *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras* These three, *viz*,—

(1) Jaimini's *Sūtras*,

(2) Śabarasvāmin's *Bhāsya*, and

(3) Kumārila Bhatta's *Vārttika*,

form the principal works in which *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* is expounded

The *Sūtras* on *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* are divided into a thousand *Adhikaraṇas* or chapters in each of which a single sub-division of the subject is discussed The materials expounded in these chapters are the various Vedic texts

The Vedas may be considered as God Almighty's code of laws which He, as our supreme King, has propounded for us, His subjects, to follow He has many officials whose duties are to see that these laws are properly administered The officers of His are the well-known deities, *Indra*, *Vāyu*, *Varuna*, *Agni*, *Yama*, *Īśāna*, *Kubera*, *Nirṛti* and others In the same way as we have, in this mundane world of ours, legal practitioners and courts of law for purposes of thrashing out obstruse, dubious, and controvertible points, even so, for the Vedas, the divine book of law, an exposition clarifying subtleties is necessary

and that exposition is the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Śāstra* of Jaimini

Case Law is a familiar branch of law which consists in quoting precedents and decisions in parallel cases in support of one's contention Likewise, in *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* the arguing very largely partakes of the nature of Case Law While trying to bring out the significance of particular usages, their occurrences elsewhere together with the meanings assigned in those contexts are cited in support of particular lines of argument

The trite, little *sūtras* of Jaimini, find themselves elaborated in the *Bhāṣya* of Śabara The author of the commentary is said to be a chip of the Lord Īśvara Himself It is said that when Śiva appeared in the form of a hunter to present to Arjuna the weapon (*Astra*) known as *Pāśupatāstra*, He composed this *Bhāṣya* on Jaimini's *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras*

As it contains a thousand sub-divisions, *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* is also known as the thousand-chaptered work or the *Sahasrādhikaraṇī*.

The Vedas may be considered as consisting of two parts, basing the classification on the nature of their contents These are the *Pūrva* and the *Uttara Kāṇḍas* The *Saṃhitā* and the *Brāhmaṇa* portions of the Vedas form their *Pūrva Kāṇḍa* This part therefore deals with the various actions connected with the performance of the Vedic rites enjoined on the followers of *Sanātana Dharma* The net result of the performance of these actions is a kind of mental purification, which, in turn, is said to lead to the realisation of the essential oneness of the individual soul (the *Jīvātmā*) with the all-pervading Divinity (the *Paramātmā* or *Brahman*) Those parts of the Vedas devoted to

this subject of realisation of our oneness with God form their *Uttara Kānda* and consist of the Upanisadic texts On this account, the *Uttara Kānda* of the Vedas is also spoken of as the *Vedānta* (the end of the Vedas) or the *Vedasiras* (the Summit of the Vedas) As *Pūrva Mīmāmsā* is an annotation on the *Pūrva Kānda* of the Veda, even so, the *Uttara Mīmāmsā*, expounds the Vedic *Uttara Kānda* or the *Upanisads* The *Upanisads*, as we have already seen, deal with the all-pervading *Brahman* and with the attainment of oneness with it by the individual soul This part of the Divine Law of the Vedas has been commented upon by the sage, Vyāsa, who was Jaimini's preceptor (*Guru*) The greatness of this sage, Vyāsa, and the depth of our indebtedness to him will be realised when it is remembered that it was he who —

(i) classified the Vedas,
(ii) composed the great Epic, *Mahābhārata*, and
(iii) was the author of the eighteen *Purānas*

Vyāsa's annotation or digest of the *Uttara Kānda* of the Vedas is known as the *Brahma Sūtras* There is a beautiful simile employed in describing the supreme importance of the *Upanisads*, the basic texts of *Uttara Mīmāmsā* The Vedas are likened to a tree whose flowers are the *Upānisads* The beauty of this figure lies in its peculiar aptness Even as, in a tree, its blossoms, though insignificant in bulk, nevertheless form its very essence, the *Upanisads* contain the highest teachings of the Vedas, though, in size, they are considerably smaller than the *Samhitās* and the *Brāhmanas* *Uttara Mīmāmsā* enquiries into the teachings of the *Upanisads* The *Brahma Sūtras* of Vyāsa consist of one hundred and ninety-two chapters (*Adhikaranas*) The first *Bhāsyakāra* or commentator on these *Sūtras* on *Uttara Mīmāmsā* was *Ādi Sankara Bhagavatpādācārya*

The end of *Karma* or actions is *Jñāna* or knowledge Hence, the *Upanisads* or the *Uttara Kāndas* of the Vedas are also known as their *Jñāna Kāndas* They deal purely with matters of the soul The *Bhāsyas* of Śankara and others on *Uttara Mīmāmsā* bring out clearly the relationship between the original *Upanisads* and the later *Sūtras* of Vyāsa As the first author of works supposed to pertain to the end of things, the great Śankara has been honoured with the unique title of *Jagadguru*, or the world preceptor

The *Brahma Sūtras* of Vyāsa, as commented upon by Śankara, have been further elaborated by Sureśvarācārya in the latter's *Vārttika* or gloss The latter's name in his *Pūrvāśrama* or prior to donning the brown robes and turning an ascetic, was Mandanamiśra He is said to be an incarnation of Brahmā and his wife, Sarasa Vānī, an Avatār of Brahmā's spouse, Sarasvatī Mandanamiśra was first a devoted follower of the *Karma Mārga* or the path of action, as indicated in *Pūrvamīmāmsā*, but was converted to the *Jñāna Mārga* (the path of knowledge) as taught in *Vedānta* or *Uttara Mīmāmsā*, by the Great Śankara After conversion he became such a staunch follower of the latter path that he supplemented his master's works by glosses of his own such, as, his *Vārttika* on the *Brahma Sūtra Bhāsya* and on the *Taittirīya* and the *Brhadāranyaka Upanisads*

CHAPTER XIII

THE REST OF THE UPĀNGAS—NYĀYA

We have already seen in previous chapters that the sacred books containing the teachings of *Sanātana Dharma* are fourteen in number —*viz*, the four Vedas, the six *Angas*, and the four *Upāngas* We have also seen that *Mīmāmsā*, the first *Upānga*, is again sub-divided into two parts, the *Pūrva* and the *Uttara Mīmāmsā*. In this chapter we shall deal with the first of the remaining three *Upāngas* viz , *Nyāya*

Next in order to *Mīmāmsā* comes *Nyāya*, the second *Upānga* Its *Śāstra* or principal work has for its author the sage, Gautama The main object in view in this branch of our *Dharma Pramānas* is to establish with the aid of reason (*Yukti*) the existence of an all-pervading Being, the Parameśvara. The instruments it employes in deducing its conclusions are the inferences (*Anumānas*) Thus to those who believe in an appeal to reason in matters of religious doubt the *Nyāya Śāstra* forms the *Grantha* principally of use

We said in an earlier chapter that among the deciding factors in settling religious doubts and controversies, individual reason has been assigned but a secondary place in *Sanātana Dharma* Still the fact that a certain amount of play should be conceded to reason cannot be denied The Vedas contain certain teachings and *Mīmāmsā* brings

forth clearly the exact imports of these teachings and we, like good boys, believe in these and follow them Still there do occur moments when doubts arise in our minds and challenge our faith During those moments, unless we invoke the aid of reason in dispelling the doubt and establishing the infallibility of the Vedic teachings, our faith in the Vedas will fail to be firm and lasting The process may well be likened to the erecting of a pillar Before satisfying ourselves that it is securely fixed, it is imperative to shake it in all kinds of ways to see that it is capable of withstanding the various stresses and strains to which, later on, it might be subjected We should guard ourselves, however, against this reason turning out to be perverse (*Yukti* becoming *Kuyukti*)

The perverse application of reason (i e, *Kuyukti*) has also been condemned by the great Śankara in his *Sādhana Pañcaka*, a work composed by him at the request of his disciples, while he was on the point of leaving for *Kailāsa*

As far as possible we should try to make use of reason in pinning our faith on the various Vedic teachings Otherwise, we would feel like getting entangled in a wilderness But in our arguings we should make proper use of our reason This is exactly the process followed in the *Nyāya Śāstras* Besides the work of Jaimini, there is another work on *Nyāya* by the sage, Kanāda, known as *Vaiśesika*

In order to be able to understand how exactly *Nyāya* stands relative to *Mīmāmsā*, let us revert, for a while, to the *Sādhana Pañcaka* of Śankara Among other precepts which he prescribes in it for his disciples, he enjoins on them the supreme necessity of seeking a proper teacher or *Guru* from whom alone the *Upanisads* and the Vedas are to be learnt The idea is that, by this method, *bhakti*

starting in us as *Ācārya Bhakti*, or devotion to the teacher, ultimately leads to *Īśvara Bhakti* or devotion to God The importance of learning the *Srutis* properly at the feet of a *Guru* has also been stressed in the following line occurring in Brhad Āranyakopanisad —

आत्मा वारे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः ।

When the lessons have thus been properly heard, they should be contemplated upon This contemplation or *Manana*, coming after *Sravana* or listening, consists in a silent analysis of the teachings in the light of the pupil's own reason It is in the course of this examination that the instrument of inference or *Anumāna* should be employed This inference consists in deducing results which cannot be actually perceived by the senses by a process of reasoning out with the aid of other phenomena capable of sense perception As a good example of this *Anumāna-Pramāna* may be mentioned our inferring the existence of clouds from the noise they produce during thunder-storms or of the wind by the noise it makes in blowing over other visible objects

As *Mīmāmsā* is useful to the disciple in his *Sravana* or hearing of the Vedas, even so *Nyāya* and *Vaiśesika* find their use in his *manana* or contemplation of their teachings Hence it is that these two branches are considered as Vedic *Upāngas*

Let us now examine, in detail, some of the conceptions occurring in the *Nyāya Sāstras* There is a term we meet with rather frequently in these *Tarka Granthas* or works on Indian Logic, *viz*, *Padārtha*, (पदार्थ) which taken literally means the import of words but which, comprehensively is applied to all the concrete ma[illegible] [illegible]ing in

this world and their attributes The term itself has been defined as follows in Tarka Sangraha:—

पदार्थत्वम् अभिधेयत्वम् ।

According to our religion a real understanding of the true nature of these various *Padārthas* will cure us of many ills which, otherwise, overtake us These *Padārthas* could be correctly understood by us in two ways—*viz*, by actual sense perception or *Pratyaksa Pramāna* or with the aid of inferences or *Anumāna Pramāna*

Padārtha has been divided into seven classes which are grouped under two main heads The seven sub-divisions are —

(i) *Dravya*, (ii) *Guna*, (iii) *Karma*, (iv) *Sāmānya*, (v) *Viśesa*, (vi) *Samavāya* and (vii) *Abhāva*

The first six of these fall into the natural group of *Bhāva* or the state of being, while the last constitutes the second main group of *Abhāva* or non-being.

भावोऽभावश्च ।

It may strike us as being somewhat strange in the above classification that non-being is deemed a *Padārtha* *Padārtha*, as we have already seen, is, literally, the meaning of words and a particular word denoting a state of non-being is still a *Padārtha* as it conveys a meaning Hence, the above classification

To proceed to a detailed consideration of these *Padārthas* Taking, first, the broad division of these into *Bhāva* and *Abhāva*, suppose we have a bunch of flowers on a table in front of us The *Bhāva* of the floral cluster is found with the table, while its *Abhāva* or non-being is with us Thus its *Bhāva* is present where its *Abhāva* is not In other words *Abhāva* is capable of residing at different

places and with different objects Let us take the case of a box with no shine on its polish The *Abhāva* of the quality of shining is present in the box Renew the coat of polish and you find that the *Abhāva* of shining disappears in the box, on the other hand, its *Bhāva* is now found associated with it Hence, at one and the same place, *Abhāva* can exist at some periods and disappear at certain others Thus, being capable of existence at different places and at different times, in exactly the same fashion as *Bhāva*, *Abhāva* also becomes a *Padārtha*!

Out of the seven *Padārthas* enumerated above, the first three, *i e*, *Dravya*, *Guna*, and *Karma*, are called *Sat-Padārthas* or those with demonstrable existence The existence of the remaining four cannot be so demonstrated as the former. The first, *Dravya*, can exist as a *Sthūla Padārtha i e*, in one of the three states of material existence, solid, liquid, and gaseous Knowledge, desire, happiness and sorrow cannot, on the other hand, so exist These latter are the *Guna Padārthas* and can exist only in relation to the *Sthūta Padārthas* of the *Dravya* class These cannot be separated from the objects in association with which they occur. The third, *Karma*, means action Acts of motion and similar other deeds, such as, running, walking, etc, are instances of *Karma* Like *Guna*, *Karma* also occurs in association with the *Dravya Padārthas* For instance, when a man runs, his action of running cannot be separated from him, the runner

Sāmānya indicates kinds of associations or groups It is also known as *Jāti* in Sanskrit In a herd of, say, cows, the individual animals agree in possessing the quality of being cows. This 'cowness', if we may then constitutes the *Sāmānya Padārtha* pres-

group The separate and distinctive features possessed by the various individuals of a group are instances of *Viśeṣa*. *Samavāya* is the name applied in Indian logical texts to the quality of inseparableness of both *Guna* and *Karma* from *Dravya* A similar union, where it exists, between a *Dravya* and a *Dravya* is sometimes spoken of as *Samyoga* in contradistinction to *Samavāya*

In the same way as the division of *Padārthas* into seven groups, these groups themselves have been further subdivided For instance, *Dravya* has been classified under nine sub-groups, which are —

Pṛthvī, *Ap*, *Tejas*, *Vāyu*, *Ākāśa*, *Kāla*, *Dik*, *Ātmā* and *Manas*

The first five of these are the *Pañca Bhūtas* or the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and the firmament An interesting correlation can be traced between these five elements and certain features about our body-build Before proceeding to deal with it, however, a consideration of our sense organs and sense preception is necessary

We all know that there are five sense organs in our body, but few, perhaps, are aware that there is a close relationship between these and the *Pañca Bhūtas* enumerated above The five sense organs are the eye the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the skin of the entire body, and the perceptions made known by these are, respectively, sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch Thus the capacity to perceive these sensations are localised in particular organs only The eye can only see but not hear, smell, taste, or touch Likewise with the other organs The five *Indriyas* or sensory organs perceive the five *Gunas*, *Rūpa* (or form, consisting in shape, size, colour, etc), *Rasa* (taste), *Gandha* (smell), *Sparśa* (touch), and *Śabda* (sound) Of

these it is with the aid of the organs of *Sparśa* or touch that we feel heat and cold.

These five *Guṇas* are seen to reside in the five elements in a peculiar way. The *Pañca Bhūtas* exhibit these *Guṇas* in a diminishing series. While *Pṛthvī* or earth possesses all the five *Guṇas*, *Ap* or water, the second element, has only four, *Gandha* or smell being absent in it. Similarly, in *Tejo*, both *Rasa* and *Gandha* are absent; in *Vāyu*, *Śabda* and *Sparśa* alone; and in *Ākāśa* only *Śabda* are seen to exist. As *Gandha* is present only in *Pṛthvī* and not in the other four elements, it is supposed to be the special characteristic quality or *Guṇa* of that element. Likewise *Rasa*, taste, is the special *Guṇa* of the second element, water. It is true that *Rasa* is present in one other element also, *viz.*, in *Pṛthvī*, but it is the water in the tongue that enables that organ to perceive the *Rasa* quality of *Pṛthvī*. An absolutely desiccated tongue is blind to the feeling of taste.

Sparśa or touch is the distinguishing *Guṇa* of the element *Vāyu*. *Śabda* forms the special as well as the only *Guṇa* of *Ākāśa*, the last element. This is curiously in accordance with the recent discovery of modern science that sound is more a product of the ether than of the atmosphere!

The first five *Dravyas* which form the *Pañca Bhūtas* are thus capable of exhibiting the *Guṇas* perceivable by our sense organs. The rest of the *Dravyas*, *viz.*, *Kāla*, *Dik*, *Ātmā* and *Manas* do not show these qualities. *Kāla* is the time indication and *Dik* denotes the place factor. *Ātmā* is the knower of all these *Dravyas*. It may even be said that the other *Dravyas* exist only to be known by *Ātmā*. *Ātmā* exists in two forms, the *Jīvātmā* or the individual soul

and the *Paramātmā* or the all-pervading soul The former is the one that endures all the suffering in the world, the latter is beyond suffering The former are many in number, and the latter is the one all-pervading Being, who, in His omniscience, silently witnesses all that happens in the world The *Vedānta* says that *Ātmā* is knowledge, to *Nyāya*, on the other hand, *Ātmā* is the Knower In *Nyāya* knowledge or *Jñāna* is a *Guna* and occurs as other *Gunas*, in association with a *Dravya viz*, the *Ātmā* The knowledge of the *Paramātmā* is infinite, while that of the *Jīvātmā* is limited Hence the term *Kiñcijñas* or 'limited knowers' applied to man

Ātmā is omnipresent, but *Jñāna* resides only in some places The seat of *Jñāna* is *Manas* or the mind It is the mind that is the seat of all our joys and sorrows In *Nyāyaśāstra*, *Guna* is sub-divided into twenty-four parts and *Karma*, into five parts

According to *Nyāya* knowledge of the *Padārthas* leads gradually to *Moksa* or eternal bliss through *Vairāgya* or determination Even to the follower of the *Vedānta Mārga*, *Nyāya* has its use, being an aid in the *Manana* or the contemplation of the *Vedic* teachings It is doubtless possible to know the *Pañca Bhūtas*, the *Jīvātmā*, and the *Manas* through methods other than the *Anumāna-pramānas* But now are we to know the all-pervading *Paramātmā*? It is here that inference or *Anumāna* finds its pre-eminent use

Let me take for instance the table in front of which I am sitting I have no idea as to who exactly made it, but from this ignorance of mine I cannot run away with the conclusion that it has had no maker at all I have certainly seen other tables made in my presence and inference there-

fore tells me that this table in front of me should have had a similar maker. Likewise this world of ours ought to have had a Maker too. He is the all-knowing, the all-powerful Lord of all. He is the preserver of all the created beings of this Universe. He is the supreme seat of mercy. These and similar other matters are dealt with in the *Nyâya Sâstra*.

CHAPTER XIV

THE REST OF THE UPĀNGAS—THE PURĀNAS

The *Purānas* form the microscope of the *Vedas* The teachings of the *Vedas* are mere abstract commands They may not easily be remembered by us For instance, the *Vedas* enjoin on us the speaking of truth—*Satyam Vada,* they say The truth of this commandment is forcefully brought home to us when we read in the *Purānas* the story of Hariścandra *Pitrdevo bhava* is another command How emphatically its teaching is rubbed into us by the story of the ideal son, Rama! It is thus the duty of the *Purānas* to magnify the pithy teachings of the *Vedic* texts

The word *Purāna* means anything that is old It is a common complaint against us that we Hindus have never had a history of our own On the other hand, our *Purānas* are nothing but a recorded account of what actually happened in the past In circumstances most adverse to their preservation it is indeed surprising that we find available to-day even the extant *Purānas* The reason why the westerners do not recognise our *Purānas* as historical documents seems to be that they are more than two thousand years old!

What is the use of past history? It enables us to benefit y past experiences as recorded in these histories in ordering the conduct of our own lives In order to make us lead virtuous lives, our ancients have recorded for us in the *Purānas* and *Itihāsas* lives of men who actually practised the virtues enjoined on us Similarly, the lives

of vicious men, also recorded in these *Purāṇas*, serve as examples which are to be avoided by us In chronicling the past in the pages of these works our ancients have selected only such of the events as relate to the moral side of their lives, as, in their opinion, the other aspects of their lives were not worth preserving

The *Purāṇas* are eighteen in number These main 18 *Purāṇas* are supplemented by 18 Co- or *Upa Purāṇas* The eighteen major *Purāṇas* amount in magnitude to four lakhs of *Granthas*, a measure of poetical works in Sanskrit Literature, which consists of a verse of 32 letters Seventeen of the eighteen *Purāṇas* consist of 3 lakhs of *Granthas* and the eighteenth, *viz*, the *Skānda Purāṇa*, alone has a lakh of *Granthas* These *Purāṇas* deal with the stories of the various *Avatāras* or incarnations of *Iśvara* Ten out of the eighteen relate to Śiva and the one *Purāṇa* which has more than a lakh of *Granthas* is one of these

To further illustrate the relationship between the *Vedas* and the *Purāṇas* let us take the following verse which forms the eighth *Śloka* of a work in Sanskrit known as *Pratāparudrīyam* —

यद्वेदात् प्रभुसम्मितादधिगतं शब्दप्रमाणाच्चिरं
यच्चार्थश्रवणात् पुराणवचनादिष्टं सुहृत्संमितात् ।
कान्तासम्मितया यया सरसतामापाद्य काव्यश्रिया
कर्तव्ये कुतुकी बुधो विरचितस्तस्यै स्पृहां कुर्महे ॥

This verse says that there are three ways in which a teaching could be brought home to the mind, *viz*,

(i) the way of the master—the command—(*Prabhu Sammitam*),

(ii) the way of the friend—the advice—(*Suhṛt Sammitam*), and

(iii) the way of the beloved—the sweet word—(*Kāntā Sammitam*)

The first of these is the commandment of the master which some may obey out of fear In the second method the well-meaning friend has as much chance of success, for those whom the fear of a master may not move may yet listen to the soothing words of the friend Where others have failed, the wife, by her peculiar influence over the husband, may have effect

The teaching of the *Vedas* belong to the first class, they are commands to be peremptorily obeyed The way of the *Purānas*, on the other hand, is the way of the friend Instead of asking us to practise this virtue or that, as the *Vedas* do, these narrate to us stories of men who have lived virtuous lives and induce in us a desire to emulate their examples The third method, *Kāntā Sammita* is followed in the *Kāvyas* of poets and play-wrights With the aid of his imagination the poet, through his works, makes these teachings far simpler and much more appealing still

CHAPTER XV

THE REST OF THE UPĀNGAS—THE DHARMA ŚĀSTRAS

We have already seen that in the former *Yugas* or Hindu time-cycles, the *Vedas* were myriad in number and that but a fraction of these is now available to us in the *Kali Yuga*. It is difficult in this age or *Yuga* to perform the various actions prescribed for us on direct references to the *Vedas*. It is hard enough to interpret their teachings correctly in these days. Hence the need for some subsidiary works which would present to us these teachings in an easier form. These works are the *Dharma Śāstras* collectively known as the *Smṛti*. These *Śāstras* are hence a kind of notes and annotations on the *Vedic* text. Manu, Yājña-valkya, Parāśara, Gautama, Hārīta, Yama and Viṣṇu are the well-known *Smṛtikāras* or authors of *Smṛti* works.

श्रुतिं पश्यन्ति मुनयः ।

In the above quotation it is stated that the sages (*Munis*) actually '*see*' the *Vedas*. The word *Smṛti* means remembering. All remembrance of a thing results from a prior experience of it. In this case the first experience is the *Śruti* and the later memory of it is the *Smṛti*. Some say *Smṛti* means the law. This is a mistaken conception. Says the *Nyāyaśāstra* —

संस्कारजन्यं ज्ञानं स्मृतिः ।

which means that the *Smṛtis* arose out of *Saṃskāra* or a state of sub-conscious existence. The root causes which

may be considered as having produced the *Smṛtis* are three in number, *viz.*,—

(i) *Anubhava* or experience,

(ii) *Smṛti* or memory, and

(iii) *Saṁskāra* or sub-conscious being.

Take the case of a man from the South who goes to Benares on a pilgrimage tour. The objects he sees both at Benares and on the way constitute his experience or *Anubhava*. When he returns home, there are occasions on which he recollects his experiences of the journey. This act of *remembering* past events and experiences is *Smṛti*. All the time he has certainly been remembering these experiences in his mind, but has not been aware of it. This state of sub-conscious existence of past experiences in our memory is known as *Saṁskāra* or *Atīndriya*. Thus it is clear that *Anubhava* or a prior experience is necessary for the other two states. Likewise, but for the *Vedas*, *Smṛtis* are impossible.

The *Smṛtis* closely follow the *Śrutis*. This relationship between the two is well brought out by the poet, Kālidāsa in a well-known simile which occurs in his *Raghu-Vaṁśa*. While describing the faithfulness with which *Sudakṣmā*, the wife of king *Dilīpa*, attended on her husband the poet says that she followed him in the same way as the *Smṛti* follows the *Śruti*. The verse in which this simile occurs runs as follows —

तस्याः खुरन्यासपवित्रपांसुम्
अपांसुलानां धुरि कीर्तनीया ।
मार्गं मनुष्येश्वरधर्मपत्नी
श्रुतेरिवार्थं स्मृतिरन्वगच्छत् ॥

—*Raghuvaṁśa*, II—2.

The [illegible] that the Upamā or simile should con-
[illegible] her and a better [illegible] truth than the Upa-
[illegible] on the thing compared. The faithfulness with which [illegible] her husband is [illegible] one of the h[illegible] of Hindu women. To compare this to the fidelity of the [illegible] to the Śruti is only to show how closely the one follows the other. And the simile has a special value [illegible] who attests the following [illegible] master in the appropriate use of this particular figure of speech.

उपमा कालिदासस्य ।

CHAPTER XVI

ĀYURVEDA—THE FIRST OF THE UPA-VEDAS

The fourteen sacred books we considered in detail in the previous discourses constitute both our *Dharmasthānas* or repositories of religious teachings and *Vidyāsthānas* or seats of learning In another reckoning, the *Vidyāsthānas* are considered to be eighteen in number The first fourteen of these are the same as those enumerated in the former classification and are hence the abodes of both *Dharma* and *Vidyā* The additional four which come in this classification are, on the other hand, only *Vidyāsthānas* and are —

(i) the *Āyurveda*,

(ii) the *Arthaśāstra*,

(iii) the *Dhanurveda* and

(iv) the *Gāndharvaveda*

These are also sometimes known as the *Upa-Vedas* or the Co-Vedic Texts

THE ĀYURVEDA

Āyurveda is that branch of knowledge which deals with the well-being of the physical body of man In order to be able to keep the body in a healthy state, we should know something about the various diseases which affect our bodies For this purpose, again, we should know about the nature of the very build of our body Similarly, a knowledge of the herbs and drugs of which the medicines

are made is also necessary Thus our *Ayurvedaśāstra* deals with the same subject matter as do the following modern sciences.—

Physiology, Zoology, Botany, Materia Medica and Chemistry

In other words, with the possible exception of Physics, all other sciences are covered by our *Ayurveda* texts.

There are two principal works of great antiquity in *Ayurveda* known as *Caraka* and *Suśruta* They are believed to have been written more than a thousand years back It is said that these works contain all that is found in most of the modern works written within the last 200 or 300 years Most of these works are said to have gone into foreign lands in the shape of translations and have formed the basis for works on medical science in those languages For instance, it is now accepted on all hands that the modern science of surgery finds many parallels in our ancient *Ayurveda Śāstras*

Thus long before civilisation had made its appearance in those countries which boast of being the leaders of thought to-day, our ancients in this country had attained to a highly advanced state of knowledge *Ayurveda* was one such greatly developed science and, as seen above, contains in it the elements of about seven or eight other sciences

This science of *Ayurveda*, as does its modern western counterpart, the medical science of allopathy, teaches us to prolong our life and gives us suitable recipes to overcome physical ills, when we happen to be affected by them

This definition of the object of *Ayurveda* leads us to a query which is of special significance to the Hindu view of life Why should we bother about so carefully preserving our life and prolonging its duration, if as we all know, we

are destined one day to part with it? What does it matter then whether we depart it now or say ten years hence? Why have the *Ṛṣis* of old then, spent their thought and attention in writing out these *Śāstras* on *Āyurveda* as a prescription for securing longevity?

According to Hindus mankind could be divided into two groups from a religious point of view—the *Āstikas* and *Nāstikas*. These two terms are commonly taken to mean, respectively, believers and unbelievers of God but this is not correct. The term *Āstikas* really refers to those who believe in the existence of a *Paraloka* or life after death as taught in the *Vedas*. *Nāstikas* are those who do not. The latter believe only in what the senses reveal to them and believe neither in the life after death nor one before birth.

Of the six systems of Hindu Philosophy, viz. *Nyāya*, *Vaiśeṣika*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga*, *Mīmāṃsā* and *Vedānta* collectively known as the *Ṣad-darśanas* (षड्दर्शन), there is no need at all for an enquiry into the existence and nature of an all-pervading God, in *Mīmāṃsā*. The *Sāṅkhyas* deny the very existence of God. Still we consider both these sets of people as *Āstikas*, because they both believe in *Veda Prāmāṇya* and in the existence of a *Paraloka* in the manner taught in the *Vedas*. In the remaining four systems both God and the Vedic *Paraloka* are believed in.

Likewise, even among *Nāstikas* we find both sects believing in and those not believing in God. For instance, the Christians believe in God as also do the Muhammadans while the Buddhists do not believe in God but only in a kind of *Paraloka*; all these however are to be classed as *Nāstikas* because their beliefs are not in accordance with the Vedic teachings.

To revert to the original query about the utility of the *Ayurvedaśāstras* to the Hindus with their peculiar religious outlook on life Being *Āstikas* in the manner described above, their avowed creed is to follow closely the *Vedas* According to them the present life and the sufferings we endure in it are the results of our past sins As expiation for them and with the definite end in view of freeing ourselves from this eternal cycle of life and death we are supposed to perform the various rites prescribed for the purpose in those texts If these rites are to be properly performed, it is essential that our body is kept in a state of good health It is with this object of helping us to keep our bodies in a fit condition that the sages of old have evolved this science of *Āyurveda* It is actually said in the *Āyurvedaśāstras* that our body is only a *Sādhana* or pathway for the observance of *Dharma* —

शरीरमाद्यं खलु धर्मसाधनम् ।

In the same way as the *Kuśa* grass, twigs of Ficus religiosa and certain other trees, ghee and un-husked rice are some of the materials required for the performance of Vedic rituals, the body of the performer is equally a requirement Nay, it is the chief among all these requirements It, therefore, becomes a sacred duty with us to preserve the body

This conclusion could be arrived at in yet another way Says the *Gītā* —

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥

The Bhagavad-Gītā—V—23

which means —

"He that is able, while still here, to withstand, before liberation from the body, the impulse of desire and anger, he is a Yogin, he is a happy man"

Translation by Mahādeva Śāstri

We do not know what our next birth is going to be like We do not know when our end is coming But in order to better our position in the life to come and purify ourselves we should strive to do as much good in this life as possible To achieve this object should we not try to keep ourselves physically quite fit and prolong our lives? Hence the need for *Āyurvedaśāstra*

Āyurveda fully believes in the truth that prevention is better than cure and prescribes a regulated diet as a recipe superior to medicine The former prevents the disease altogether, while the latter comes in only after the man has fallen a prey to the disease One of the items in the Ayurvedic diet prescription is the periodical *Upavāsa* or fast As a minimum dose of this item it has been prescribed that a fast should be observed once a fortnight, *i e*, on the *Ekādaśī* days (*i e* —the eleventh day after each new and full moon) The importance of this receipe is brought home to us in the *Purānic* story of Rukmāngada, who is said to have ordered that in his kingdom no one should feed on the *Ekādaśī* day—that even the children should be denied their milk and the cattle their fodder! It is further said that it is a sin to take food on that day

Similarly there are also other days in the year on which complete fast has been prescribed—for instance, the *Mahā Śivarātri* day

If one finds it difficult to observe complete fast on these days, it is recommended as the second best course

that one should live on light food only such as sweet potatoes It should, however, be borne in mind even by such persons that the ideal to be aimed at is a complete fast, because it is the confirmed belief of *Ayurveda* that an *Upavāsa* is the best of dietetic prescriptions.

The methods of treatment in *Ayurveda* are as varied as in modern medicine, the following being some among its methods —

(i) *Śastra Cikitsā* or Surgery,

(ii) Administering the medicine directly into the blood as in modern injection,

(iii) *Vamana* or through the bringing about of vomiting,

(iv) *Virecana* or flushing out of the bowels

Likewise, there are many different kinds of preparing medicines. The following are two among these —

(i) The *Rasāyana Sevā* done in the midst of a herd of cattle, and

(ii) that done in the shade of a Phyllanthes emblica tree

It is commonly believed that surgery is a modern science, but now it is admitted on all hands that this science was known to our ancients as long ago as over two thousand years back and that, even in this our *Śāstras* have formed the basis for the modern works on this branch of medicine!

Before concluding this discourse on *Ayurveda* one more fact may be mentioned about the high value which our ancients set on *Upavāsa*

Annadāna or gift of food is practiced in this country by the Hindus in two ways Special feeding houses

such as *Dharmaśālās* and *Annasatras* are erected and feeding in these is provided for by philanthropic and religious-minded persons The other consists in *Brāhmana samārādhanās* being arranged as part of *Īśvara Ārādhanas.* As instances of the latter type may be mentioned the following —

(i) the daily feeding of Brahmins in temples and mutts,

(ii) the *Samārādhana* performed as soon as a Hindu devotee returns home from a trip of pilgrimage to well-known places of religious sanctity such as Benares in the north and Tirupati, Palni, Rāmeśvaram, etc in the south

There is, however, one difference between these two types of feedings The one is a charitable act pure and simple, while the other is part of the worship of the particular *Devatā* which occasions the feeding The former is regulated by the definition —

अन्नस्य क्षुधित पात्रम्

which means that food should be given only to the hungry and the needy In the latter places while the persons fed are about to fall to their meals, the following *mantra* is uttered —

अनेन ब्राह्मणसमाराधनेन सर्वात्मको भगवान् हरि. श्रीजनार्दन प्रीयताम् ।

which clearly indicates that this feeding is a *Vaidika-Karma* and is propitiatory to the same deity whose worship it follows That these feedings are *Pūjās* and not a charity is further borne out by the very definition of the term *Samārādhana* which is composed of the two words *Samyak* and *Ārādhana* and which means a *Pūjā* which is well done

In prohibiting food on the *Ekādaśī* day, our *Śāstras* forbid not only the charitable feeding of the first type, but also taboos the latter, in spite of its being only a form of worship. Such was our fore-fathers' faith in the efficacy of fasts, which they actually eulogise in the saying—

लङ्घनं परमौषधम् ।

(*Note* —The expression "लङ्घनम्" literally means 'skipping' and is used to denote a fast because we 'skip over' the meal-time while fasting)

As our body forms an essential pre-requisite for both the observance of the *karmas* of the *Pūrva Mīmāṃsā* and the attainment of the *jñāna* of *Uttara Mīmāṃsā* it forms one of the principal duties of a Hindu house-holder to try to preserve the *Śāstras* of *Āyurveda* as best as he can.

CHAPTER XVII

ARTHASĀSTRA—THE SECOND UPA-VEDA

This is the second among the *Upavedas* Among the four fundamental requirements of man—the four *Puruṣārthas*—viz , *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Moksa*, the second or *Artha* is dealt with in this *Upa-veda* Unlike the first *Puruṣārtha, Dharma,* whose fruits are not directly enjoyable in this birth, *Artha*, the second, consists of material objects capable of yielding tangible results then and there. The house we live in, the clothes we wear, the ingredients we use in our food, are all objects of material riches and hence come within the purview of *Artha*

The *Śāstras* devoted to *Dharma*, the former, come under the one or the other of the *Upāṅgas*, those dealing with the latter are contained in the *Upavedas*

Food, raiment and a house to live in and in which to seek protection from the elements are the fundamental requirements of man in any community He assumes a right of ownership in these once he comes to possess them and this personal right of his must needs be protected in some manner In order to do this, a Government is instituted in the community A monarch has got to be found as the head of the Government and laws have to be formulated for the orderly conduct of state business It is these laws that form the *Arthaśāstra*

The community has to be protected from the evil doers within its own fold The protection of the entire commu-

nity from the wrongs that may be inflicted on it by neighbouring groups, monarchical or otherwise, belongs, however, to the field of a different *Upaveda*—the *Dhanurveda*

The Hindus recognise four traditional paths for the allaying of evil either from within the community itself or from outside it *viz*, the *Upāya Catuṣṭaya*—the *Sāma*, the *Dāna*, the *Bheda*, and the *Daṇḍa* These methods should be applied one after the other in the order mentioned, the one following to be used only if the preceding one is found to have had no effect Details of the application of all these four methods of chastising the person who offends the members of the group are found in the *Arthaśāstra* The application of *Daṇḍa* towards aggressive neighbouring States forms the subject-matter of the next *Upa-veda*, the *Dhanurveda*

Of the *Upāyacatuṣṭayas*, *Sāma*, the first, consists of turning the evil-doer away from his path through the counsel of friendship The second, *Dāna*, tries to bring about the desired result through the device of making sacrifices or gifts The other two ways are of an objectionable nature and should be resorted to only when the former fail *Bheda*, the third, consists of any or all of following devices —

(*i*) inflicting an injury on the offender himself

(*ii*) frustrating his attempts to secure a gain, and

(*iii*) cutting off all ties of friendship with him

The fourth *Upāya* is the direct way of the cudgel and should naturally by very sparingly used.

The whole idea of punishment is based on an abiding faith in the efficacy of its deterrent effect. It implies, however that crime should first be perpetrated for *Śikṣā*

or punishment to come in to correct the criminal The ideal aimed at by *Arthaśāstra* is the very elimination of of the thought of crime It is only as the next best course that it attempts to wean away possible delinquents from the path of evil by making examples of actual criminals through subjecting them to suitable courses of punishment

It is one of the duties of the king to teach through his *Dharmaśāstras* that *Kāma* (Passion), and *Krodha* (Anger) are to be guarded against, as they may result in untold evil His commands enjoining these teachings should be couched in mild terms and should be so made that the subjects should realise that the king's orders have been issued not to his own personal gain, but in the interest of the people themselves His aim should be to increase the number of the virtuous rather than to multiply the courts of law wherein the offenders may be brought to book Even as a corrupt society has many laws, it would be a very deplorable state of affairs indeed, if the need for increasing the number of prisons and law-courts is being ever felt in any land

Śikṣā or corrective punishment is only a form of injury, and in resorting to it as a means to end crime, one is only committing one wrong to remedy another. *Śikṣā* as applied to an offender in the eye of law consists in causing some kind of personal injury or hardship to him The end in view in doing so is not so much an attempt to obtain a form of retribution from the wrong-doer for the damage caused by him, as an offer of security to the community from further damage by him, during the time he undergoes the punishment. Suppose in a group of men there were an individual who has lost his head and starts throwing stones at others He is promptly picked up and

thrown into a lunatic assylum, not with the idea of making him pay for the injurious effect of his diversion, but to prevent further harm to the community through his mental unsoundness Likewise, a man who steals another's property is also suffering from a disease of the mind and his correction through, say, imprisonment, is undertaken with exactly the same object in view as in the other case Thus even in the methods of law, i e, the *Arthaśāstra*, an element of physical injury is involved The *Dharma-śāstras*, on the other hand, give no quarter to injury in any form The way of *Dharma* consists in mild teachings. It needs no laws to implement it Under the complete and successful sway of *Dharma* alone, the only duty that would be left over for the king would be to find food for his subjects

In the good old days the society with its caste system had its own effective ways to prevent crime and to bring to book the wrong-doer The custom of social ostracism was a very effective weapon in the hands of the rural folk which enabled them to achieve this This naturally took away a large amount of legal work from the ruler of the State, who consequently had more time to devote to the religious uplift of his subject Hence it is that we find in the land such a large number of temples built through the agency of the State It was only in later days, when these social ties were relaxed, that law courts began to increase in number and temple building got neglected, the affairs of law and order engaged an increasingly large share of the King's attention at the expense of the religious or *Dharmic* side of his duties, and temple going gave place to law court pleading Thus a land full of holy shrines which were buzzing with life, was gradually transformed into one with ruined temples and flourishing law courts

In the ancient *Arthaśāstra* one of the most hallowed of the King's duties was to promote mental peace among his subjects His aim was to scatter amongst his people seeds which would ripen into divine qualities such as, *Satya* or truthfulness, *Paropakāra* or doing good to others, etc , and in trying to achieve this end, his method was to foster the growth of *Śānti* or peace in the kingdom An essential pre-requisite for this is the possession in the land of at least a handful of men leading virtuous lives whose example the king could set up before the others for emulation This explains the sages of the forests, whose only earthly riches were the rags they wore on their bodies, having been sought after with kingly honours by our ancient kings

The one potent force which, more than anything else, has been responsible for the equilibrium in the social structure of the past having been thrown out of balance, is the asserting of reason—particularly of the perverse type (*i e* *Kuyukti*, (कुयुक्ति) over *Bhakti*—or faith Hence it is that the *Arthaśāstras* of our ancients placed greater value on the preservation of *Dharma*, the *Varṇāśrama* system, etc As methods of State-craft, the *Upāya-catustayas*, *Sāma*, *Dāna*, *Bheda* and *Danda* were given but a secondary place

CHAPTER XVIII

DHANURVEDA—THE THIRD UPA-VEDA

As we have already seen under the *Upāyacatustayas*, *Dhanurveda* deals with the *Dandopāya* as applied by kings against the aggression of neighbouring kings It is the teachings of this *Upaveda* that enabled the ancient Hindu kings to discharge the specific duties enjoined on them by the *Varnāśramadharma. viz*, the physical protection of the subjects The Brāhmins were expected to learn the *Śāstras* of this *Upaveda* and to teach them to the kings and princes of the land

Dhanurveda is, in reality, a science of warfare, and, as the name indicates, the principal weapon dealt with in it is the *Dhanus* or the bow According to these *Śāstras* weapons used in warfare are of two kinds,—the *Astras* (अस्त्र) and the *Śastras* (शस्त्र) The former consists of incantations the chanting of which was supposed to bring about the rout of the enemy *Astras* such as the *Pāśupatāstra* and the *Nāgāstra* we read about in the *Purānas* and the *Itihāsas* belong to this class. Many of the *Mantras* of the *Atharvavedaśākhā* are said to be useful in *Astraprayogas* Even if a small bit of *Kuśa* grass is flung at the enemy with the proper chanting of the relevant *mantra*, it is credited with the power of bringing about the utter destruction of the foe

The *Sastras*, on the other hand, are the actual weapons of warfare such as the bow and arrows of old and the

success in employing these naturally consisted in the skill with which they were handled

The *Sastras* are said to be of three kinds —

viz . (i) the *Mukta*,

(ii) the *Amukta*, and

(iii) the *Muktāmukta*

Those weapons which have to leave the hands of the user to inflict an injury on the enemy come under the class of *Mukta* Missiles such as stones and arrows flung at the adversary belong to this group The weapons of the *Amukta* class, on the other hand, remain in the possession of the person using them at the time the blow is dealt The sword is an example of this class The rope used in lashing and similar other weapons leave the hands of the thrower in the first instance but sooner or later return to him The weapons of this type belong to the *Muktāmukta* class As Purānic instances of this last group may be mentioned the various *Cakrāyudhas* (चक्रायुध) which are credited with the power of returning to the owner after doing their work of destruction

Likewise among the *Astras* many different types seem to have been recognised Further each *astra* has had its opposite As examples we may cite the following pairs

(i) the *Nāgāstra* and the *Garudāstra*

(ii) the *Āgneyāstra* and the *Varunāstra*

Under the *Varnadharma* the Brāhmin is supposed to be well-versed in all the eighteen *Vidyās* or branches of knowledge including the *Dhanurveda* and the *Gāndharvaveda* but the practice of the latter is the business of the other castes His function stops merely with the theoretical

mastery of these and subsequent imparting of the knowledge to the particular classes whose duty it is to practise them Hence it is that the sage, Vasistha, never practised the art of *Dhanurveda* though he was well-versed in it, on the other hand, he sought to fulfil the duties enjoined on him as a Brāhmin by teaching that sience to the sons of Daśaratha Likewise, the sage, Viśvāmitra, had also attained mastery of that science and could very well have defended himself and repulsed the Rākṣasas such as Mārīca and Subāhu, who were out to spoil his *Yāga*, but having obtained brahminhood through severe penance, he no longer wished to practise that science We therefore find him invoking the aid of the Kṣattriya Prince, Rāma, to do the work of destroying the Rākṣasas.

Thus under the ancient *Varnāśramadharma* the brāhmin, as the professional teacher of the community, should be well-versed in all the branches of knowledge, from, say, sword-play to painting! He must then select his *sisyas* or disciples from among the community and impart to them instructions befitting their respective castes He has to be contented with whatever fees or *Gurudaksinās* his pupils can afford to offer him and should not hanker after more

Among other interesting details of warfare contained in the *Dhanurveda* are those relating to *Vyūhas* (व्यूह) or field arrangement Different *Vyūhas* or plans for the arrangement of the forces on the battle-field have been described such as the *Dhanurvyūha*, the *Padmavyūha*, the *Garudavyūha* etc We are familiar with the story, in the Mahābhārata, of Prince Abhimanyu perishing in the battle because of his incomplete knowledge of *Vyūha* warfare.

It is further enjoined on every follower of *Sanātana-dharma* that a knowledge of *Dhanurveda* should be acquired in addition to his knowing the particular profession prescribed for him under the *Varnāśramadharma* The object in view is that, in times of need, every member of the society should be able to render field service and assist his Ksattriya King As *Artha* or material wealth is required for his living, even so a knowledge of *Dhanurveda* is essential for the protection of his person in times of need

CHAPTER XIX

GANDHARVAVEDA—THE FOURTH UPA-VEDA

Gāndharvaveda deals with subjects a knowledge of which neither helps us to satisfy the cravings of the stomach nor serves us in times of danger to our physical person, as do the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Dhanurveda* On the other hand, they cater to our æsthetic tastes and please the senses For instance, painting, one of the subjects dealt with in the *Gāndharvaveda* helps us to produce pictures which gives a peculiar pleasure to the eyes Similarly, the ear finds a feast in music The same is the case with the stage and the screen The class of beings who, in the old days, were supposed to spend their whole time in the enjoyment of these pleasures were the Gandharvas They were believed to be invisible to the ordinary human eye, but like the tiny microbe visible only through the microscope and similar other objects revealed to human vision only with the aid of the X-Ray, these beings were also said to be seen by certain human beings who possessed super-sensitive eyes *Divyacaksus* (दिव्यचक्षुस्)

Even to-day, in pictures supposed to represent the Gandharvas, we see them depicted as playing on the *Vīnā*, showering flowers all over They are considered to be the patron deities of sensual pleasures and the works devoted to an enjoyment of these form part of what are known as the *Gāndharvaveda*

These *Śāstras* are mainly three in number —*Viz.* —

(i) *Nrtya*,

(ii) *Gīta*, and

(ii) *Vādya*

There are many other subjects besides these included in these *Śāstras* such as, painting, cooking, etc , but these are only of secondary importance As a matter of fact, of the sixty-four parts into which according to one reckoning knowledge is divided by the Hindus the majority come only under the scope of the *Gāndharvaveda* It has been held, however, that this branch of knowledge should be indulged in only in the last resort, as the only use derived from it consists in the mere satiation of the senses

Of the main sub-divisions of *Gāndharvaveda*, *Nṛtya*, the first division, consists in the conveying of the meaning of songs and other compositions through symbols or movements of the hand and feet, without the aid of the spoken word Let us take, for instance, the following *śloka* from *Kṛṣṇakarṇāmṛta*, which is a description of the person of Lord Kṛṣṇa

कस्तूरीतिलकं ललाटफलके वक्षःस्थले कौस्तुभं
नासाग्रे नवमौक्तिकं करतले वेणुं करे कङ्कणम् ।
सर्वाङ्गे हरिचन्दनं च कलयन् कण्ठे च मुक्तावलिं
गोपस्त्रीपरिवेष्टितो विजयते गोपालचूडामणिः ॥

The art of *Nṛtya* or *Nātya* consists in giving expression to a *śloka* like this, not through repeating it by word of mouth, but by suitably moving the various parts of the body From the very movements of the body the audience should be able to understand that this is the piece interpreted This art of *Nātya* is known by two names according as the performer is a man or a woman If it is the former, it goes by the name of *Tāndava*, if the latter does it, the dance is known as *Lāsya* Thus Lord Nataraja executed the *Tāndava*, while His spouse perform-

ed the *Lāsya Nṛtya* forms part of even *Devatā* and *Rājopacāras.*

The spoken word is a means through which we attempt to give outward expression to our inner ideas and sentiments. Through *Nātya* the same object is aimed at, but without the aid of speech Performances with marionettes are a form of *Nātya* which stringed dolls are made to execute The Malabar *Katha Kali* and its western counterpart, the Tableau vivante, are only modified forms of *Nṛtya*

Though the terms *Nṛtya* and *Nātya* are used in the above description as though they were interchangeable the two really represent two different types of the art *Nṛtya* is mere movement of the body designed to give pleasure to the eye *Nātya*, on the other hand, sets out, not only to please the eye through graceful movements of the body, but also attempts to convey a meaning or interpret a song The gait of certain animals and birds is supposed to be graceful and nice to look at, while that of others is not The elephant and the swan are examples of the first class, while the dog and the crow are typical of the latter. Even so certain movements of the human body can give pleasure to the eye of the observer The person making these movements is said to perform *Nṛtya*

The arts of *Nātya* and *Nṛtya* are commonly known as *Bharataśāstra* and a separate class of people—the *Bharatas*—had been set apart to practise this art These were the *Devadāsīs* or the women dedicated to temples for services to the deity, and their assistants The children of these *Bharatas* sought the stage for their careers In the *Bharataśāstra* we find lessons on acting also One instruction which strikes us as being remarkable in having for its aim

the preservation of a high degree of morals on the stage, is that the pair acting the part of a couple on the stage should, in actual life, be husband and wife! Other instructions equally interesting are that a man should not play the role of a woman, and a woman, that of a man, that a public woman should not act as the spouse of a married man on the stage, and that a brāhmin should not act in a drama A reference to this may be seen in ancient Sanskrit dramas in which the play starts with a conversation between the *Nata*, the principal male actor, and his wife

Gīta is the name for music It is of two kinds *viz* — vocal and instrumental The instruments producing the latter kind have been classified as :—

(i) *Tantrīvādyas*,
(ii) *Randhravādyas*,
(iii) *Carmavādyas*, and
(iv) *Lohavādyas*

The human throat, as the instrument producing vocal music, has been described as *Māmsavādya* or the 'Flesh Instrument' It gives rise to the musical notes with the aid of a proper manipulation of the wind in the larynx The four classes enumerated above may be described in English as —

(i) the stringed,
(ii) the wind or the holed,
(iii) the leather, and
(iv) the metal instruments

The first class of instruments are said to possess the quality of *Anuranana* or continued resonance Music is produced on them by the plucking, either directly by the fingers or indirectly (as in the western piano), of their strings The

"*Vīnā* and the *Tambūrā* among Indian instruments belong to this class The *Randhravādyas* are those with a certain number of holes and music is produced on them by blowing suitable volumes of wind through the holes The flute, its various modifications among western instruments, and the South Indian *Nādasvara* or pipe are instances of this class The third class of *Carmavādyas* have a stiff leather tied to them by beating which notes of music are produced The various kinds of drums come under this class The last class is helpful merely in keeping beats or measures of time, while vocal or other instrumental music is going on The *Tāla* instruments of both western and oriental music, such as the cymbals, come under this class. Besides these may be mentioned two instruments prominent in modern-day music which may be described as the "mud or clay-instruments" These are the South Indian *Ghatavādyas* and the *Jalataranga*" (the Indian Xylophone) In the former, a pot and in the latter, a set of porcelain cups are the materials used

The Brāhmin was supposed to be well-versed in these *Sāstras* also, but again only to impart the knowledge to others and not to practise these arts himself As a matter of fact the ideal in the good old days seems to have been that every individual should know practically all the branches of knowledge, but that each should practise only that branch which is connected with the profession laid down for the class in which he is born under the *Varnāśramadharma* There is a story told about Ādi Sankara (unsupported by any reference to it in any of the extant *Sankaravijayas*) which goes to prove the truth of the above statement A cobbler is said to have once asked the great teacher whether he knew how to stitch a pair of shoes and on the *Guru's* reply in the affirmative, to have

handed him the needle and the leather The *Ācārya*, before starting on the job, rubbed the needle on the tip of his nose, as was the custom among the cobblers and there was no need for the cobbler to proceed with the test The great master had already stood it

Thus both according to the teachings of the *Artha-śāstras* and those of the *Gāndharvaveda* the caste system is seen to have been the strong bedrock of ancient Hindu society The Brāhmin was the professional teacher of the community and, in that capacity, had to attain proficiency in all the eighteen branches of knowledge Whatever fees his disciples could afford, should form his sole means of livelihood Wherever the king of the land had given the Brāhmin free land, the latter was expected to impart his learning to others without expecting any fees in return. These and similar other regulations helped to keep alive the *Varnadharma*, which is the most vulnerable piece in the foundation on which the whole superstructure of the *Sanātanic* society rests

CHAPTER XX

OUR ŚĀSTRAS—A GENERAL ACCOUNT

(*A Resume*)

Having dealt with in detail the various scriptural texts which form the principal literature for our religion, we can now attempt, in an omnibus fashion, a general *resume* of the teachings contained in these books.

The entire stretch of land from the Himālayas in the North to the Cape Comorin in the extreme South, and from the Arabian Sea in the West to the Bay of Bengal in the East, named India on the modern map, forms the country in which the religion of the Hindus, the *Hindu Dharma*, took its rise and has flourished In the ancient days this bit of country was known as *Bhāratavarsa* or *Bāratabhūmi* For the material and spiritual well-being of its people there were a number of books or *Śāstras* in which the various branches of knowledge were expounded One set of these were the *Śāstras* on *Āyurveda* and these set out to assist their readers in keeping physically fit and in trying to save themselves from premature death. The various medicinal drugs growing in the country were analysed, their properties studied and, based on these analyses, suitable prescriptions were made for the several diseases from which mankind was seen to suffer Today, thanks to the foreign nature of the Government of the country, the *Āyurvedaśāstras* find themselves thrown to the background of neglect and Western Allopathy is the medicinal

science which is receiving the patronage of the State It is a little gratifying, however, to find that in recent days an awakening in favour of our ancient system of medicine has been in evidence and that one finds sufficient encouragement to hope that, with the granting of larger and larger measures of political reforms, there might come a day when *Ayurveda* would have come into its own

Of late the deplorable tendency of decrying our ancient scriptures and their teachings has been noticed among the followers of our religion

This is all the more regrettable when it is realised that western civilisation is but a thing of yesterday compared with the hoary culture and advancement of the ancient Hindus Besides, our works have been peculiarly designed for the use of the people of this country and where the teachings of the corresponding works of western countries are seen to differ the blind adoption of the latter may not always be suited to our conditions To take but a single instance, one fundamental difference between us and the Western people in the matter of food consists in the manner in which we take it They take their meals on tables while we squat on the floor and have them served on platters A number of differences arise out of this in the Oriental and the Western designs of building houses

Instances are not wanting of branches of learning in which we have attained a difinite superiority over them House building, Medicine, Agriculture, Sanitation, Mathemetical calculations, are all excellently vivified in our Hindu culture Our mathematical science is quite different from the Western system A case in point is the science of music In pure Carnatic music, which is the type practised

in South India, seventy-two major tunes known as *Mēla-kartā-Rāgas* have been recognised, but of these only two are known to Western music.

The acquiring of knowledge from foreigners is no-where prohibited in our *Śāstras*, on the other hand, Manu definitely permits it Only, in assimilating the teachings of foreigners we should not lose sight of the fundamental teaching of our *Śāstras* that wherever there is a conflict between the *Dharmaśāstras* and the others, the former should be followed The basic faith underlying this is that spiritual elevation rather than material well-being is the goal aimed at by our *Śāstras*

Such great surgery as was practised in Ancient India is not now known to anybody The reason is plain enough, *viz*, that there is no state protection to that art

Modern surgery is commonly believed to be an entirely Occidental science, but the pleasing discovery has been made that an exact counterpart of it had existed in the *Suśruta* part of our ancient *Ayurvedaśāstra* When we trace the history of surgery we learn that it had its origin in India and subsequently passed to Western Europe through Greece and Italy Like ancient Indian astronomy, this science of Indian Surgery seems to have been first translated by the Arabs into their language whence it spread to Europe

Likewise, even among our own sacred books the teachings of the *Dharmaśāstras* should always be given preference In other words, whenever a particular teaching in the *Arthaśāstra* or any other *Upa-veda* is seen to be at variance with what is taught in the *Smrtis* or *Dharmaśāstras*, the former should be rejected, giving

precedence to the latter To take a concrete instance, when a modern doctor prescribes the Cod Liver Oil as a tonic for the body, the true *Snātanist* will have to throw the doctor's advice overboard and seek other remedies because the *Dharmaśāstras* forbid him from taking in flesh in any form.

In the same way as we have outward symbols to distinguish one from another groups such as the scouts, the orderlies in modern-day offices title-holders etc even so, there have been prescribed for us certain external symptoms which are intended to indicate our being the servants of the Lord These are the *Tulasīmālā* (a garland of the leaves of *Ocimum sanctum*) and the *Rudrākṣamālā*.

Our sacred books have for their one and only aim our spiritual elevation These consist of the *Vedas*, the *Śāstras*, the *Āgamas* the *Purāṇas*, and the *Itihāsas*. The *Itihāsas* are also to be considered as part of the general group of *Purāṇas* The principal or root-work on which the others are based are the *Vedas* The *Dharmaśāstras* are supposed to regulate the conduct of our lives in our homes and within the community They are broadly divided into the two groups *Ācārakāṇḍa* and *Vyavahāra-kāṇḍa* Eighteen great seers or *Ṛṣis* including Manu, Yājñavalkya, and Parāśara, are the compilers of these *Dharmaśāstras* These have for their authorities the *Vedas*

Those religions which have for their authorities the *Vedas* are known as the *Vaidika* religions and their followers are said to be *Āstikas* The rest are *Nāstika* faiths or the religions of the Unbelievers, though they may actually believe in the existence of God

On the other hand, the various sub-divisions of Hinduism, such as *Saivitism* and *Vaisnavaitism* all agree in their belief in the *Vedas* Indeed the South Indian faith of *Saiva Siddhānta* is also sometimes referred to by its followers as the *Vaidikaśaiva* faith Likewise, the ancient Vaisnavaite Saint, Nammālvār, is praised as the 'giver of the Vedas in Tamil', as in the line from the Tamil verse, *Vēdam tamil tanta māraṉśatagopaṉ*

Thus the *Vedas* which form the main characteristic of the various sub-sects of *Sanātanadharma*, is also responsible for the one distinctive feature of the main religion of Hinduism —*viz*, its namelessness Unlike most other religions in the world, its name is not linked up with that of any great personage who could be said to have founded it The Vedic scriptures which form its principal authorities, are supposed to have had no beginning It is said that the Lord took human form as Krsna only to teach humanity the *Vedas* Through the great Upanisadic Seers or *Maharsis* as mouth-pieces the Vedic texts were made known to mankind It is these Vedic verses that form the basis of the *Ṣanmatas* which are the chief branches of Hinduism

These six sub-divisions have their tenets explained in the respective *Āgamas* We have thus the *Saivāgamas* *Sakti* (or *Ambāl*) *Āgamas*, *Vaisṇavāgamas*, *Ganeśāgamas*, *Kumāra Tantras* etc The *Āgamaic* texts teach the devotee the various details involved in the worship of the particular deity selected for personal *Upāsanā* The *Saivāgamas* are said to be twenty-eight in number and the *Āgamas* devoted to *Sakti* number sixty-four Every one of these *Āgamas* consists of two parts, the *Vāmabhāga* and the *Daksinabhāga*. These two terms mean the right and the left hands The

reason for this classification should be sought for in the *Dharmaśāstras* The precepts laid down in the *Śāstras* differ for the different sections of the people For instance, in the case of the Brāhmins the commandments are considerably more rigorous than in the case of the others Meat-eating, intoxicating drinks, along with a number of other similar habits are forbidden in the case of the former, while the same are tolerable in the non-brahmin Similar, therefore, is the difference between the methods of worship detailed in the *Vāma* and the *Dakṣiṇabhāga* parts of these *Āgamas* The worship laid down for the classes of men who are used to, say non-vegetarian diet, naturally consists in animal offerings or sacrifices and belongs to the *Vāmācāra* type Those for whom the *Vāmācāra* type of worship is not prescribed are prohibited from observing it

While on this subject, it is interesting to make certain observations on the present-day view on animal sacrifice It is considered a sacrilege to kill animals for food in the name of religion, but those humanitarians who oppose offerings of animal life as items of worship never think of picketing slaughter-houses In other words, these reformers condemn, on the one hand, animal killing at temple altars, but, at the same time, wink at the habit of meat-eating prevalent in the country What really happens is a confusion of the real issue In sanctioning the offering of animals before places of worship according to the *Vāmācāravihitas*, our scriptures should not be considered as encouraging animal diet On the other hand, what is really meant is that whatever we take as our food should first be offered to God Hinduism, in being the one religion extolling at every stage the quality of being merciful to fellow-beings as a great virtue, does certainly

carry a crusade against meat-eating What really matters is the purity of heart of the particular devotee In South Indian *Śaivaite* literature there is a story told of a certain *bhakta* known as Kannappar Being a hunter by caste his offerings to the Lord naturally consisted of meat, but since it was dedicated with absolute purity of heart, it was quite acceptable to the Lord Thus the mere existence of the *Vāmācāravihita* in the *Āgamaśāstras* need not make one run away with the thought that, in Hinduism, there is even religious sanction for non-vegetarian food and for intoxicating drinks On the other hand, what is sought to be emphasised is the purity of heart with which any offering is made to the deity selected for personal worship.

Throughout in our *Śāstras* it is the spirit of renunciation that has been stressed For instance, it is said that an *Atithi* or guest at dinner should be presented with a cow, who in turn should not put it to his personal use, but should let it stray away as it likes It is obvious that the spirit of fellow-feeling towards all living beings underlying the above teaching would hardly fit in with any open sanction of animal food The extolling of the spirit of renunciation is further illustrated by the *Śaivaite* Saint, *Siruttondar's* story in which the holy personage is said to have made a dish of his own son's flesh in order to satisfy a guest.

The *Āgamas* are further divided into four parts, which are—

(i) *Caryā*,

(ii) *Kriyā*,

(iii) *Yoga* and

(iv) *Jñāna*

The first or the *Caryā* part describes the various actions which a *Bhakta* or devotee has to do In the next i e, the *Kriyā* part, details of temple-worship are given It may relevantly be asked why a temple be needed to worship One who is All-pervading! It is true that God is omni-present, but how many of us live in daily and minutely remembrance of it? We all know, for instance, that the Sun's rays have heating power, but in order to make them burn a cloth, we should get them to converge on a spot through a lens Similarly, electricity, as an energy, is present everywhere, but to generate the same, it needs us to erect special power houses Even so, in order to obtain the blessing of the Almighty, we feel the need for embodying Him at a particular place in a particular object, such as, an image towards which we could concentrate our personal worship or *Arādhanā* Such places of worship are the temples

It is said in the *Agamas* that the land on which a temple is to be built should first be thoroughly ploughed Then follow detailed descriptions of how the installation of the deity is to take place Some of the other teachings in the *Kriyā* part of the *Agamas* are injunctions as to who should enter the temples and who should not

While on the subject of temple entry reference should be made to the modern movement in favour of throwing open all temples to people of all castes It is argued by the reformers that most of the officiating priests and others connected with the temples are already so impure in their habits and morals that the sanctity of temples will not be reduced by the unclean untouchables being allowed to enter them This is only like the argument that merely because one thief has entered our house we should keep the door open and let in others also! On the other hand,

the particular thief who has found his way into the house should be driven out and steps should be taken to prevent others from coming in. Likewise, the remedy to the situation lies not in bringing in other people who are also not clean, but to cleanse the few within the temple who happen to be impure

Another controversy which sometimes rages in the South relates to the comparative antiquity of the *Āryan* and the *Dravidian* cults It is argued that the *Āryans* came from the North and were *Vaidikas* in religion The *Dravidians* are said to be the original inhabitants of the South and their religion is supposed to have had an existence absolutely independent of that of the *Āryans* Available evidence, on the other hand, points to the contrary To cite an instance, there are said to have been nine works on grammar in Sanskrit. One of these is known as the *Aindra* and is said to have been the work of the deity, Indra himself It is claimed for Tamil that its most ancient work on grammar, *Tolkāppiyam* is based on the *Aindra* grammar of the northern tongue! Another fact supporting this view is that no other religious sect besides the *Vaidika* sect is mentioned even in the most ancient of Tamil works Some of the words in the Tamil language bear further testimony to this For instance, the word *Vēlvi*, undoubtedly one of the oldest and purest in the language, means the Vedic rite, *Yāga* Likewise, the word *Marai* in Tamil means the *Vedas* and does so most appropriately Literally, the word means 'that which is hidden' The *Vedas* also stand for things which are *adrsta* or hidden from the human eye! The very existence of words such as these in the Tamil language from time immemorial would strongly support the view that the *Vedas* and the Vedic cult had permeated throughout the length

and breadth of the land, rather than that they spread to the South of the country at some later date

To sum up, the *Vedas* the *Dharmaśāstras*, the *Itihāsas*, the *Āgamas* and the *Purāṇas* have all been left to us by our ancients as invaluable heritages and show us the different pathways to spiritual salvation The *Itihāsas* are those works in which several *Dharmas* are taught to us in the shape of stories The *Purāṇas*, on the other hand, teach particular *Dharmas* or virtues through the medium of stories The *Dharmas* taught to us through our scriptures are without a beginning The religion itself is, indeed, without a name and is not associated with the name of any single individual. The great *Ācāryas* who came later, merely emphasised the one or the other of the various *Mārgas* or paths towards *Mokṣasāmrājya* For instance, Śrī Rāmānuja prescribed the *Bhaktimārga* or the path of devotion, while Śrī Śankara stressed the *Jñāna-mārga* or the path of knowledge The Hindu religion was the one faith that prevailed in the fifty-six *Deśas* or countries reckoned by the ancient Hindus As, in this reckoning, all the British provinces and Native States of modern India as well as modern Persia and Afganistan were included, the Hindu religion was, for long, the one faith known to the people of the whole of India and its adjacent countries in the North and the North-West.

CHAPTER XXI
VARNADHARMA OR THE HINDU CASTE SYSTEM

It is a matter of common knowledge that there are four castes in the Hindu social structure—*viz.*, the *Brāhmana*, the *Ksattriya*, the *Vaisya* and the *Sūdra* castes These four groups are the four *Varnas* of the Hindu religion and are also known as *Jātis* Details of these *Varnas* and their *Dharmas* or duties are given in our *Sāstras* Separate duties have been prescribed for everyone of these castes Certain actions forbidden for one class are permitted in others If a peasant takes on the emblems of austerity like *Pavitra* or *Yajñopavīta*, he causes popular umbrage Likewise if a *Dvija* discards the sacred thread and appears in public with, say, a cigarette or wine bottle in hand, he becomes equally an object of scorn in the eyes of the orthodox members of the society The *Sūdra* and the *Pañcama*, if they drink, are let off rather lightly, while a Brāhmin for committing the same offence has to undergo the consequences of a severe social ostracism! And still all these men are said to belong to the same religion Then again these men are prohibited from dining at the same table. They are not allowed to touch one another, they cannot enter into matrimonial alliances The four castes are only the main divisions in fact, each one of these has innumerable subcastes!

It was said in an earlier chapter that this religion had, in the days of old universal existence It strikes one

as strange that a religion so great as this should be differential in its teachings In other religions the commands both mandatory and prohibitive (*Vidhis* and *Nisedhas*) are the same for all the adherents of the faith It is only Hinduism which is unique in prescribing varying standards of morals for the various groups of its followers

Even among the untouchables, there are sub-divisions In every sphere we see gradations Sometimes we feel like confessing to a sense of shame that our dear religion of which we are all proud should consist of these differences

A few enthusiasts among us even openly declare that unless our religion is purged of these differential teachings, it cannot be saved

We often hear it asserted that our subjection today under a foreign rule and the humiliating treatment to which our men are subjected in foreign lands like South Africa and elsewhere are also attributable to these *provisions* in our scriptures under which some sections of the people are held in subjection by some others Let us take, for instance, the case of South Africa where differences in treatment as between man and man exist even under modern conditions A black man is prohibited from travelling in certain classes of accommodation in railway trains If he dares to do so, he is forthwith ejected from the compartment In other words, the penalty for disobedience is imposed on the wrong-doer himself On the other hand, in India, a man belonging to the lower classes is not supposed to touch one belonging to the higher castes Suppose a lower caste man somehow comes into contract with, say, a Brāhmin What is the punishment, if any, and who bears it? Not the offending untouchable, but the polluted Brāhmin, who at once takes a bath or observes a fast! A small difference it may

seem at first sight, but a remarkable one on deep contemplation

Certainly a religion which has stood the onslaught of so many foreign disruptive forces must have something in it to continue to attract its followers It may well be likened to the ancient Hindu temple These temples are very ancient structures and can never compare with the places of worship of some of the other religions These latter, for one thing, are kept scrupulously clean, while in our temples, one finds all over the place countless number of weeds and other growth The places of worship of other religionists cannot endure the ravages of time, if they are not periodically repaired On the other hand, our temples bravely endure, because their foundations have been strongly laid and their superstructure has been put up in equally strong material Likewise it would appear, the sages of old have laid the foundation stones of our religion in an unassailable manner It flourishes in spite of the cry heard particularly loudly in the past thirty years in modern times for equality in every sphere of life including the religious side

This clamour for equality reminds one of the following story Among the subjects of a certain king there was a Brāhmin family in which there were two brothers. The elder brother was well-versed in the Hindu *Sāstras* and became a professional priest. True to his calling he began to acquire wealth by flattering others in return for presents, His expenses being very limited, he amassed a huge wealth in course of time His younger brother, on the other hand, learnt English and became an officer of the crown, His ways of living, as might be expected, were more expensive and, though his monthly income was much more respectable, he found that he was just able to make both ends meet! This made him wonder why he alone should struggle,

while his elder brother was the master of a bank balance which was daily swelling, though both of them were the subjects of the same king He argued that while one man could acquire wealth by begging from others, another man in the same kingdom had certainly the right to do likewise. So saying he also began to take money from others The result is easily conjectured A report went up to the higher authorities that he was taking bribes and he was immediately sacked, in spite of his pleading that he was only indulging in what his elder brother was freely practising This difference in treatment on the part of the Government has our silent approval, but when our religion with its *Varnāśrama dharma*, comes forward with a similar set of differences in the treatment of its adherents we moderns, are inclined to gibe at it!

This should strike us as all the more surprising because it happens under a Government the official religion of which—*viz.* Christianity—makes no distinction in its teachings among its followers For instance, the ten commandments laid down in the Bible are common to all, but in matters mundane, distinctions such as the one illustrated above and others similar in effect are allowed freely to be practised!

The real fact is that ours happens to be the only faith wherein differences exist If the other extant religions of the world also make similar distinctions, no one would characterise those found in ours as odd, though the underlying reasons may be the same in both cases

To go into the root cause of these differences, we should get down to fundamentals What is religion? That which teaches us a path for spiritual salvation is known as religion

When our physical body suffers from a disease, we call in the doctor, because we believe that he, of all people, is the one person who knows about the ailment and can therefore relieve us of the malady Our falling a prey to diseases presupposes the existence of a physical body capable of being affected by these diseases Suppose that some one comes up with the promise that he could rid us of the very cause of these diseases by releasing us from our mysterious obligation to get entangled in the endless cycle of bodily births and deaths Would we not jump at the prospect of such a radical cure? The doctor who claims ability to effect this cure is the *Dharmaśāstrakāra* Manu, then, is the divine doctor who offers to give us the panacea, not for the diseases of our physical body, but for the disease of diseases, the body itself In fact the *Vedas* carry the above simile a step further when they assert that whatever Manu says is medicine for mankind —

यद्वै किं च मनुरवदत् तत् भेषजम् ।

—*Taittirīya Samhitā*

Though the same doctor cures several patients, seldom does he administer the same medicine to several people at a time, unless indeed an epidemic rages in the locality Different are his prescriptions to different people, even as the diseases he cures are varied in nature Likewise, Manu, in his *Dharmaśāstras*, gives his varying prescriptions only to suit the numerous diseases (the results of past *Karma*) to which mankind is heir No one questions the modern doctor as to why his prescriptions to his various patients differ, whereas we do not seem inclined to treat Manu in the same kind fashion

As in the doctor's prescriptions—varied though they are—there may be some common items such as certain

articles of diet, even so, in Manu's prescriptions, there are some common items which are to be observed by all. These are the *Sāmānya Dharmas* or the common duties of which we have already spoken in a previous chapter. A few of these are mentioned in the following verse from Manu —

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
एतान् धर्मान् समासेन चातुर्वर्ण्येऽब्रवीन्मनुः ॥

—*Manusmṛti*, X, 63

The reader will notice in the above verse the expression, "चातुर्वर्ण्य"—literally the Four Castes—and probably conclude that, according to the *Dharmaśāstras*, there are only four sanctioned castes in the Hindu social structure. This is, however, a mistaken idea. The commentators on the above *śloka* have all taken the expression "चातुर्वर्ण्य" as meaning all the castes, thereby implying the existence of many other castes besides the four better-known ones. Thus what we have to understand from this is that there were a number of castes sanctioned by our sacred books, but of these only four were the principal ones. As a Vedic authority in support of this view may be quoted the passages occurring in the *Naramedhaprakarana* of the *Yajur Veda Mantras*, 3rd *Astaka*, 4th *Prāśna*, in which man himself is described as the sacrifical animal (the *Paśu* of the *Yāga*). In the detailed descriptions contained in this *Prakarana* we find a number of castes mentioned besides the four conventional ones.

The *Dharmaśāstras* themselves permit intermarriages between certain of these castes and the offspring of such unions have been described as the *Anulomas*, as opposed to the *Pratilomas* or those born of unions not

sanctioned by the *Śāstras* Different worldly occupations are prescribed for these castes

The above network of castes may be likened to the seven fundamental notes in the scale of musical notation—the *Saptasvaras*—different permutations and combinations of which have given rise to the seventy-two *Mēlakartā rāgas* and a legion of *Janyarāgas* in the system of pure Carnatic music Likewise, the four main castes mingled among themselves and spread into a large number of castes or *Varnas*

Our *Vedas* in their *Karmakānda* part speak of these various castes and their distinctive duties The same *Vedas* in their *Jñānakānda* portion say that, once knowledge of the divine is attained, these distinctions between caste and caste vanish—the Brāhmin ceasing to be a Brāhmin, the *Candāla* ceasing to be so and even the *Vedas* ceasing to be the *Vedas*

In contradistinction to the *Sāmānyadharmas* referred to in an earlier paragraph, *viz*, *Satya* or truthfulness, *Brahmacarya* or celibacy, *Ahimsā* or non-injury to living creatures, *Asteya* or non-coveting of others' belongings, *Śauca* or bodily purity, *Indriyamigraha* or control of the senses and *Aparigraha* or a form of selflessness, are another set of *Dharmas* or duties known as the *Viśēsa dharmas* These are the duties prescribed separately for the various castes and, as their observance is determined by birth, are also spoken of as the *Varnadharmas* Thus the Brāhmin has certain duties to be performed, as also the *Sūdra* and the *Candāla* or Untouchable In order to enable the different castes to perform properly the particular duties laid down for them, certain facilities—if they may be called so—are also afforded to them For instance, the Brāhmin is expected to preserve a high degree of

purity of body and soul so as to be able to worship and pray for the good of the community and as an aid to him in this task, it has been laid down that the other *Varnas*—nay, even the other members of his own group at certain periods—should not touch him

The existence of the caste system with the exclusive rights and privileges of the various subdivisions provided the people of old with a powerful weapon in their hands to prevent crime The threat of social ostracis—or boycott of the offending member by the other members of the community—was so effective that crime was almost absent from the land It is only with the gradual loosening of the caste ties in society in the name of modern progress that crime also began to increase

If all the duties laid down by a religion are to be followed by everyone of its adherents, the possibilities are that, once there is a slip somewhere, the whole structure will collapse On the other hand, if we separate these into groups and allot to various groups of men the different duties or *Dharmas*, this danger will be avoided Even if one group fails in the observance of its allotted duty, the others may continue unswerved from their paths and thus the religion may be kept alive This may be likened to the device of increasing the stability of a baloon by making it a compound structure of a number of gas bags Even if one bag gets punctured, the rest may keep the whole bunch afloat Thus the provision for separate classes with different duties and privileges prescribed for each has its own value to the religion in the long run

It is therefore imperative on us to realise this aspect of our ancient caste system so as to guard ourselves against the danger of promoting hatred and strife by an incorrect

understanding of the situation We should, on the other hand, be aware of the fact that there are plenty of common *Dharmas* the practising of which is not the exclusive right of any particular caste and should hence practise these In addition to this, we should, as far as possible, try to observe also the *Viśesadharmas* which birth—*i e*, past *Karma*—has determined for us We should see to it that, through all our actions in this world, mutual love and a desire for common happiness permeate

CHAPTER XXII

VEDIC SAMSKĀRAS IN GENERAL

In Hindu religious phraseology the world we live in is known as *Miśra Loka*. The term *Miśra* means mixed, and our world is so called because pleasure (सुख) and pain (दुःख) are mixed in it In contradistinction to this, there are other *Lokas* or worlds where unmixed pleasure or pain alone exists For example, in worlds such as the *Brahma* or the *Satyaloka*, the *Vaikuntha* and the *Kailāsa* one is supposed to meet with unalloyed pleasure, whereas in the *Narakaloka* there reigns pain unalloyed The Hindus believe in different kinds of hell depending on the severity of the pains and tortures prevalent in them, and the worst of these is known as the *Rauravanaraka* It is believed that the manes of our dead ancestors have got to be satiated in some ways and definite Vedic rites have been prescribed with this object in view If the spirits reside in worlds other than the hells, the *Tilatarpana* offered on the full and new moon days are said to suffice in satisfying these spirits If, on the other hand, they happen to be consigned to perdition in the one or the other of the *Narakalokas* certain special *Samskāras* have been prescribed to appease them These consist in the uttering of of special *Mantras* on occasions such as squeezing the water out of wet clothes, drying the hair after bathing, washing the hands after a meal, etc Hence there are different *mantras* for squeezing wet clothes, washing hands after meals and for drying the hair after bathing As an

instance may be cited the following which is uttered in the *Andhra* part of this country at the conclusion of a meal —

रौरवेऽपुण्यनिलये पद्मार्बुदनिवासिनाम् ।

The person uttering the above is offering water to quench the eternal thirst of those spirits which, by their misdeeds, have been doomed to roam in the *Raurava* and the other hells

Likewise the *Andhras* make food offerings at the time of taking their meals, known as the *Citrādi Bali* This practice corresponds to the *Vaiśvadeva* ritual of the Tamil Brāhmins

All these are instances of what are known as the Vedic rites or *Samskāras*

As we have already stated, the Universe is divided into three parts, the upper, the middle, and the nether worlds The former are the *Satyaloka*, the *Vaikuntha* and the *Kailāsa* The second is our human world and the third, the various hells or *Narakas* According to our *Śāstras* our world of the *Miśraloka* is, in one sense, the best of all the worlds, because it is quite possible for us to go to other worlds from this as a result of our own actions. On the other hand, the periods of stay in the other worlds are fixed once for all and cannot be altered by individual effort. In this world of ours we are at liberty either to perform good or bad deeds and thus qualify ourselves for stay in the upper and the nether worlds, respectively. Thus we sow in this world and reap the results in the others In this world we have the option to perform what we like The Almighty has blessed us with liberty of action through our senses This freedom is not witnessed in the other *Lokas*, which are known as the *Bhogabhūmis*.

If born as a bull, can a man perform any act? The Devas are also akin to the bulls In this mundane world one can attain Salvation through the performance of religious rites This world is the place of action, the fruits of which can be enjoyed in the other *Lokas* Even in this world, only human beings endowed with reason can perform certain acts Residents of other *Lokas* have no authority or *adhikāra* for *Karma* Hence it is that this world is known as the *Karmabhūmi* Likewise, even within this world of ours certain regions alone are considered as fit places to perform the actions prescribed in the Vedas, as also certain fixed periods For instance, our *Bhāratavarsa* is the one spot on earth considered as such a worthy place for the performance of religious rites, and is, for that reason, known as the *Punyabhūmi* Likewise a particular part of the day is fixed as the proper time for the performing of *Śrāddha* Even in this *Bhāratavarsa* certain specified places have been excluded for the performance of Vedic rites

We all know that in matters mundane, each result is preceded by a multitude of processes or efforts For instance, let us take the agricultural result of producing rice or corn There are the following processes to be gone through The seed must first be prepared The land has to be ploughed and watered Then we have the sowing, the transplanting, the weeding and the hoeing, the periodical waterings and drainings, and the final harvest Similarly, in order to achieve the final result of having a piece of cloth to wear, we have the various prior processes in the field where the cotton plant is grown and in the factories and mills where the spinning and the weaving take place

Likewise, in matters spiritual The Hindu firmly believes that a desired result in the life or lives after the

present one must perforce be first preceded by actions as detailed in our *Śāstras* Certain qualities or *Guṇas* are also necessary for the successful performance of these deeds There are also certain specified times in the course of the day or the month and the year when each of the Vedic *Saṁskāras* is to be performed.

It has been ordained in our *Śāstras* that in order to attain spiritual salvation, one has to perform forty *Saṁskāras* and practice eight *Ātmaguṇās* The *Ṛṣis* of old have prescribed detailed rules for the correct performances of these actions in their *Dharmaśāstras* These are the *Smṛtis* There are said to be twenty-eight of these *Smṛtis* in all, of which eighteen are considered to be the principal ones The remaining ten are secondary in importance and are known as the *Upa-Smṛtis* The sages, *Manu, Yājñavalkya, Hārīta, Parāśara* and others are among those who have composed these *Smṛtis*

Besides these, there are also other works of a general nature known as *Sūtras* which are devoted to a description of these *Saṁskāras* Among the authors of these latter is the sage, *Gautama* Another author who, like *Gautama*, has composed *Sūtras* of a general nature common to all is the sage *Āpastamba*

It is claimed that a proper observance of these forty *Saṁskāras* will take one to the *Brahmaloka* where the denizens enjoy eternal and unalloyed happiness.

यस्यैते चत्वारिंशत् सस्काराः अष्टावात्मगुणाः स ब्रह्मणः सायुज्यं सलोकतां जयति ॥

Between the time the *Niṣeka* ceremony is performed while one is inside the womb of the mother and the time

of one's being burnt on the funeral pyre these forty *Samskāras* are to be performed by the Hindu Brāhmin In these *Karmas* fire or *Agni* plays a great part Both the *Niseka* which marks the beginning of our carnal existence and the final rites on *Śmaśāna* are done in front of the element, fire It has been enjoined on every Brāhmin that the sacred element fire, should be preserved The *Grhastha* or married man should do it through his daily *Aupāsanakrtya* The *Brahmacārī* should guard it through his daily *Samidādhāna* ritual The *Vānaprastha* or one who enters upon the third stage of the Hindu life, should secure the same end through what is known as the *Kaksāgni* or the fire which has to be kept in the forest It is only the *Sannyāsī* or one who has renounced the world, for whom no *Agni* has been prescribed He is supposed to possess the *Jñānāgni* or the fire of supreme knowledge It is for the same reason that the final disposal of a *Sannyāsi's* mortal remains is not attended with any *Agnisamskāra* Strictly speaking, the body of a dead *Sannyāsī* should be taken into the jungle, cut into four parts and thrown in four directions where they should form food for birds and beasts Even the burial now given to it is only out of respect If it cannot be thrown in the jungle as food or animals, it should be interred and some plants should be grown on it, so that the elements composing the body may, after decomposition, form manure for these plants

The fire in front of which the marriage ceremonies are performed should be preserved until death, it being kindled every day at the time of performing the *Aupāsana* of the *Grhastha* It is further enjoined that this same fire should be used for cremating the body finally on the burning ground *Agni* should be worshipped by all the four *varnas* of Hindu society at the time of Marriage

At the present moment, however, the custom of preserving *fire* is fast dying out among the Hindus The Parsis happen to be the only group of people at the present day who rigorously protect the fire Their faith is only an off-shoot of our religion The name of their scripture, the *Zendavasta*, is only a corruption of the Sanskrit, *Chandovasthā* The name of their prophet, *Zorathuster*, is, likewise, a corruption of the name *Saurāstra* *Iran*, their country, is also named after the sanskrit word, *Iryas* If their fire is extinguished, these people rekindle a fresh one at enormous cost

There is no spiritual use out of this mortal body In the end even this body should be offered to the Gods, as every act during the period of its existence was dedicated to the Almighty

CHAPTER XXIII

THE INITIATORY OR FIRST SAMSKĀRAS

The Forty *Samskāras* or Vedic rites which are believed to purify the soul are as follows —

(1) *Garbhādhāna*,

(2) *Pumsavana*,

(3) *Sīmanta*,

(4) *Jātakarma*,

(5) *Nāmakarana*,

(6) *Annaprāsana*,

(7) *Caula*,

(8) *Upanayana*,

(9) to (12) *Prājāpatya* and the three other *Vedāvartas*,

(13) *Snāna*,

(14) *Vivāha* or *Sahadharmacārinīsamprayoga*,

(15) to (19) the *Pañcamahāyajñyas*,

(20) to (26) the seven *Pākayajñyas*,

(27) to (33) the seven *Haviryajñyas*, and

(34) to (40) the seven *Somayajñyas*

The *Pañcamahāyajñas* are, the *Brahmayajña*, the *Devayajña*, the *Pitryajña*, the *Manusyayajña* and the *Bhūtayajña*

The seven *Pākayajñas* are the *Astakā*, the *Anvastakā*, the *Pārvana*, the *Śrāvanī*, the *Āgrahayānā*, the *Citrī*, and the *Āśvāyujī*

The seven *Havirvajñvas* are the *Agnyādhana*, the *Agnihotra* the *Darśapūrnamāsa* the *Agrabāyana* the *Cāturmāsya* the *Nirūḍhapaśubhanda*, and the *Sautāmanī*

The seven *Somayajñas* are the *Agnistoma*, *Atyagnistoma* the *Ukthya*, the *Sodasī*, the *Vājapeya* the *Atirātra*, and *Aptoravāma*

Of these some have to be performed daily while others are to be less periodical For instance, the *Pañcamahāyajñas* are among the most important of daily oblations Likewise the two rituals known as the *Aupāsana* and the *Agnihotra* should also be performed daily *Darsapūrnamāsa* is a *Samskāra* which comes up for observance once a fortnight or *Paksa* The *Pākayajñyas* other than *Aupāsana* are annual rituals, while all the others are events occurring once in a life-time

Thus, from the point of view of periodicity of occurrence, the forty *Samskāras* enumerated above may be classified as under —

(i) Incidence daily —The *Pañcamahāyajñvas*, the *Agnihotra*, and the *Aupāsana*

(ii) Incidence fortnightly —The *Darśapūrnamāsa*.

(iii) Incidence annual —The six *Pākayajñas* other than *Aupāsana*

(iv) Incidence once in a life-time —All the other twenty-six *Samskāras*

The Vedic *Karmas* being varied in the periods of their occurrence has a parallel in our secular life also These may, for instance, be likened to the various operations in the agriculturist's field of which harvesting is an annual affair, whereas the watering of the crop is a matter of almost daily occurrence

The *Vedas* prescribe *Samskāras* for a man ever since he is conceived in the mother's womb Thus the first three rites, *viz* *Garbhādhāna*, *Pumsavana* and *Sīmanta* are to be performed during the period of the would-be child's stay inside the mother's body The idea is that our attempts at purifying the future child's soul should commence right at the beginning of its carnal existence

The first ritual of *Garbhādhāna* is done at the time of consummation of one's marriage *Pumsavana*, the second, is to be performed when the mother is in the third month of her pregnancy, and *Sīmanta*, in the sixth or the eighth month In the *Sankalpa* which forms a prelude to these *Samskāras*, we start with dedicating all these rituals to Lord *Parameśvara*

We have next to consider the superiority or otherwise of the *Karmamārga* over the *Bhaktimārga* We often come across instances of the one group finding fault with the methods of the other The follower of the *Karmamārga* to whom the worship of the Almighty consists merely in the strict observance of the various rites and rituals prescribed in the *Vedas*, ridicules at the method of worship of the other class, which consists in congregational singings and dancings in praise of the Lord known as the *Bhajana* To an impartial observer the former or the *Karmamārga* would appear to be the more proper mode of worship To illustrate this we may take the following story —

A certain man of wealth had two servants under him one of whom, as a method of winning his master's favour, was given to standing in front of his master flattering him with songs of praise and saying the best of things about

him The other observed the strictest silence and never did so much as put in his appearance before his master, but was always intent on carrying out loyally whatever work of the master could be performed by him The visitors and friends of the rich man, carried away by outward appearance, considered the former as the more devoted of the two servants, whereas the master's own opinion was quite otherwise This less ostentatious servant had earned a higher place in his master's esteem, he being the one through whom most of the duties in the household were being performed

Likewise, it does not need a great stretch of imagination to realise that God too would, like the master in the story, prefer only an observance of the duties or *Karmas* laid down by Him in the *Vedas*, to the other method which merely consists in extolling the qualities of the particular deity selected for personal worship Hence it is that *Ādi-Sankara* clearly laid down that the highest kind of *Paramesvarapūjā* or worship of the Lord consists in the proper observance of the Vedic rights

All *Samskāras* are first preceded by a *Sankalpa* The first part of the *Sankalpa* defines the time of performance of the *Karma* in the Hindu style of reckoning such time The details of this reckoning have already been set forth in an earlier chapter Then follows the latter part of the *Sankalpa* which is the dedicatory part of it The actual line in the text with which this dedication is made runs as follows —

ममोपात्तसमस्तदुरितक्षयद्वारा परमेश्वरप्रीत्यर्थम् ।

and means in a literal translation that "in order that all the sins earned by my deeds may be washed out and that the Lord Parameśvara's blessings may be obtained " etc

Likewise, towards the conclusion, we end these *Samskāras* with a second dedicatory prayer to the Lord through the following lines —

कृष्णानुस्मरण परम् ।

In doing these *Samskāras*, the full meaning and import of the *mantras* chanted should be correctly understood Still one can achieve the desired results even by performing the vedic duties enjoined on him without understanding them, provided he does them with devotion For instance a collector takes more pity on a peasant who presents a petition directly than on one who presents it through a vakil He thinks that the former knows nothing but has got good faith. Similarly with the Divine Judge, the Almighty It is only then that the *Karma* performed becomes what is known as *Vīryavattara*, as would attest the texts quoted below —

यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपनिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तर भवति ॥ —*Chāndogyopanisad*

यदेव विद्ययेति हि ॥ —*Brahmasūtras*

It was said earlier in this chapter that Sankara has recommended the path of *Karma* as a means of attaining spiritual salvation The actual verse in which this teaching was conveyed by the great teacher is the one given below

वेदो नित्यमधीयता तदुदित कर्म स्वनुष्ठायता
नेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचिति काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् ।
पापौघ परिधूयता भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयताम्
आत्मेच्छा व्यवसीयता निजगृहात्तूर्ण विनिर्गम्यताम् ॥

If there happen to be flaws in the performance of any of the Vedic rites and rituals, there have been prescribed corresponding purifying ceremonies known as *Prāyaścittas*. The work or *Grantha* dealing with these purificatory rites is known as the *Hemādri*.

The highest of these *Prāyaścittas* is *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-smaraṇa* or the simple meditation of the Lord. Thus the *Saṅkalpa* which precedes every *Vedic Saṁskāra*, beginning and ending, as it does, with *Parameśvarasmaraṇa* and *Kṛṣṇasmaraṇa*, respectively, forms in itself the highest purifying *mantra*. Besides, in contemplating on both *Parameśvara* and *Kṛṣṇa* at one breath, it also indirectly implies *Śiva-Viṣṇu-abheda* or the essential oneness of Śiva and Viṣṇu.[1]

As already stated in previous chapters, each *mantra* is addressed to a particular Vedic deity, through whom the graces of Lord Almighty are sought to be invoked. Whichever may be the deity addressed through particular *mantras*, the ultimate end in view is the propitiation of the one and only Lord Almighty. The Hindu believes that, like the various different kinds of tax-collectors in a mundane kingdom, these minor deities to whom the incantations are addressed all convey the same to the Lord Almighty.

Besides the specific deity or *Devatā* mentioned above, each *mantra* has also a *Dravya* or sacrificial material attached to it. Thus each Vedic ritual has three things essentially associated with it, *viz*—the *mantra*, the *Deva*, and the *dravya*.

To return to the subject on hand. The first three *karmas* enumerated at the commencement of this chapter are to be performed while the future child is within the

mother's womb The first *karma* after birth is *Jātakarma*, or the ceremony connected with the child's birth On the eleventh day follows the next *karma*—i e. *Nāmakarana*, or the naming of the child In the sixth month after birth comes off the ceremony of *Annaprāśana* or the food-giving ritual The idea underlying all these is that all our actions on this earth are to be done in the name of and as dedicatory to the Lord Paramēsvara

The first five *karmas*—viz, *Garbhādhāna* to *Nāmakarana* are done by the parents on behalf of the child before and after its birth, as the case may be This is like prescribing medicines and diets for the mother as a cure for the ailing infant The character and propensities of the future child will depend very much on the manner in which the parents conduct themselves both while the child lives as a foetus in the mother's womb and after its birth during its infancy In performing these rites in a truly dedicatory spirit, the foundations of the spiritual welfare of the child are well laid

The *karma* which follows *Annaprāsana* is the *Caula*, ceremony This consists in shaving the scalp and the rear part of the head, leaving the hair in the middle portion untouched That even this ceremony should be done with the aid of *mantras* shows the utter religiosity of the Hindu mind It is believed by the strictly orthodox that the hair so retained as part of a religious function should not be removed except as part of a like religious rite,—for instance while becoming a recluse or a *Sannyāsī*, when the whole head is to be completely shaven

The modern practice of mending the tuft or cropping hair (which was first shaven with Vedic *mantras*, with *sankalpa* dedicated to Paramēśvara) is an unholy act For

instance suppose a man builds a temple and consecrates in it a Śivalinga The same man then suddenly pulls off the Linga Is it a good act? Even so with *Śikhā* The *śikhā* on the head of a Hindu, made with Vedic rites at the time of the *Caula Samskāra* can be removed only when one takes to *Sannyāsa Āśrama* with the recitation of *Mantras*

The next *karma*—viz *Upanayana*—is the first Vedic rite which, normally, one performs with a full knowledge of what is being done It is essential, therefore, that the young *Dvija* should possess a knowledge of Sanskrit at the time of his *Upanayana* ceremony, otherwise he will naturally not be able to enter into the spirit of the various *Samskāras* which he will be performing during the ceremony The Vedic rites and rituals involve the functioning of thought, word and deed *Smarana* or meditation of the Lord is done by the mind, the chanting of the *mantras*, through the spoken word, and the rest of the ritual such as, for instance, the *Sāstānga namaskāra* or prostration, with the aid of the other organs of the body These rites, properly done in strict accordance with the teachings of the *Vedas*, will not only pave the way for spiritual salvation, but also assure happiness and prosperity in the present life.

CHAPTER XXIV

BRAHMACARYA AND VIVĀHA

I BRAHMACARYA OR THE PERIOD OF CELIBACY

Perhaps more than any other group of people, the Hindus believe that the sins of the parents are visited on their children. Thus the good and bad deeds and natures of the parents are said to affect the nature and lives of their offspring. In order to ensure that children are not affected by the misdeeds of their parents, certain rituals or *Samskāras* have been laid down in Hinduism. The *Dosas* or sins to ward off which these *Samskāras* are to be undertaken are of two kinds *viz*, the *Garbha Dosas* (or those resulting from the female parent) and the *Bīja Dosas* (or those resulting from the male parent). These *Samskāras* are to be done by the parents and not by the offspring, because the latter are not fit to perform vedic rites until their *Upanayana* or thread ceremony is celebrated.

Thus, for a young *Dvija* the *Upanayana* ceremony becomes the starting point in his religious life. The term *Upanayana* consists of the two roots *Upa* and *Nayana*, the latter of which means 'being taken towards'. As stated in the *Sūtra* 'नयतीति नयनम्' this term means also 'the eye', for it is the eye that 'takes us towards the objects of our desires'. The other root, *Upa*, means *near*. In an *Upanayana* ceremony the young *Dvija* who is being initiated, is supposed to be 'taken near a *Guru* or preceptor'.

There are different *Gurus* or preceptors for the different kinds of *āsramas* or stages of a *Dvija's* life *viz*, *Brahmacarya*, *Grhastha*, *Vānaprastha* and *Sannyāsa* The *Guru* for the first of these *āśramas* is a *Vedavid* or a person well-versed in the *Vedas* (and in other *śāstraic* lore) Likewise the *Guru* for the last *āśrama* is a *Brahmavid* or one who has acquired the knowledge of the Eternal or, as it is usually put, one who has realised *Brahman* The object in seeking a *Vedavid* as one's *Guru* in the first *āśrama* is the acquisition of Vedic learning, that of seeking a *Brahmavid* in the final *āśrama* is the realisation of the highest truth, *viz* *Brahmajñāna*

Upanayana is the *samskāra* on performing which the newly initiated *Kartā* enters upon his *Brahmacarya Āśrama* The corresponding ritual which concludes this *āśrama* is known as *samāvartana* Thus the period in one's life between *Upanayana* and *Samāvartana* is known as one's *Brahmacarya* proper The word *Samāvartana* refers to the act of returning from a place Thus during one's *Brahmacarya Āśrama*, one is expected to seek a fit *Guru* with whom he should reside—away from his parents—and at whose feet he should study the *Vedas* along with their *Angas* and the other allied *śāstraic* texts This period of stay he concludes with the *Samāvartana* rite and returns home to his parents

Upanayana is known as the *Pūrvānga* or the first part of *Brahmacarya* The word *Brahma* has the following six different meanings —

(i) *Visnu*,

(ii) *Śiva*,

(iii) the *Brāhmin*,

(iv) the all-pervading *Paramātmā*,

(v) *Tapas* or penance, and

(vi) the *Vedas*

Of these the meaning that fits in in the word *Brahmacarya* is the *Vedas*. Hence the *āśrama* or stage of life known as *Brahmacarya* is intended for acquiring a thorough mastery of the Vedic texts. It has been laid down that the minimum period to be spent at the feet of the *Guru* for learning the *Vedas* and their *Angas* should be twelve years.

Since *Upanayana* forms the *Pūrvānga* or the first part of *Brahmacarya*, it follows that the performance of the *Saṃskāra* of *Upanayana* must perforce be succeeded by a period of vedic study at the feet of a *Guru* as detailed above. Otherwise the *saṃskāra* of *Upanayana* ceases to have any meaning. This is like the *Saṃskāra* of *Pariṣecana* not being followed by *Bhojana* or actual eating, of which it forms the *Pūrvānga* or the introductory part.[1]

In between *Upanayana*, the *Pūrvānga* or the introductory part, and *samāvartana*, the *Uttarānga* or the concluding part of *Brahmacarya*, four *Vrttis* or penances are prescribed for the young *Brahmacāri*.

These are as follows —

(i) *Prājāpatya*,

(ii) *Saumya*,

(iii) *Āgneya*, and

(iv) *Vaiśvadeva*.

The *Vedas* are really a collection of *mantras* or incantations and, on this account, may be spoken of as a *mantra samūha*. There are various different kinds of *mantras* in usage such as —

Rāmamantras,
Pañcākṣaramantras,

Abhicāramantras,

Drsti Mantras (those which ward off the evil eye),

Mantras used by magicians,

Mantras used by those who practise the black arts,

Mantras which are supposed to cure snake and scorpion bites, and so on and so forth

Thus there are *mantras* both for good and evil purposes Definite periods of study have been fixed for the learning and practice of these *mantras* Every one of these should be learnt under a master in strict accordance with the rules laid down for the practice of these It is only when these are so learnt and practised that the desired ends in view could be achieved The *Vedas* are also a collection of *mantras* for which definite rules have been prescribed for their learning and practice One who so attains a mastery of the *Vedas* and of their *Angas* and *Upāngas* is known as a *Śrotriya*

If *mantras* are to be efficacious there should be rigid rules regarding their learning and practice which should be strictly adhered to Thus every *mantra* has its rules or *Niyama*. The *niyama* for the vedic collection of *mantras* is *Brahmacarya* *Brahmacarya* is the main *niyama* for the *Vedas* There are further *Vrttas* which a *Brahmacārī* has to observe during the course of his study These *Vrttas* vary with the different *Kāndas* or parts of the *Vedas* Thus during the time one learns the *Prājāpatya Kānda* one should observe the *Prājāpatya Vrtta* Then follow the three others *viz*—*Saumya Vrtta*, *Agneya Vrtta* and *Vaiśvadeva Vrtta*, depending on the particular *Kānda* of the *Vedas* which is being learnt at the time

When all these four *Kāndas* are mastered, with the *Guru's* permission the *Samāvartana* or concluding rite should be performed.

The *Vratas* detailed above are those prescribed for the followers of the *Krsna Yajurveda*. There are corresponding *Vratas* for the other *Sakhas* of the *Vedas*. For the *Rg Veda*, for instance, *Vratas* such as the *Godana Vrata* and *Upanisad Vrata* have been prescribed.

The *Samavartana* ceremony is also sometimes known as *Snana*. Whoever has performed it is called a *Snataka*.

Every *Dvija* should study his particular *Sakha* or branch of the *Vedas* and the *Vedangas* associated with that particular *Sakha*. The study of the *Vedas* should be commenced on the *Upakarma* day which falls on the *Purnima* or full moon day in the month of *Sravana*. The study of the *Vedas* proper should be suspended on the full moon day coming off in the month of *Magha*. The remaining six months of the year should be devoted to the study of the *Vedangas* and the *Upangas*. Even within the former period of six months the *Vedas* should be studied during the bright half of the month or *Suklapaksa* (i.e. the fortnight from a new moon to a full moon) and the *Angas* during the *Krsnapaksa* or the dark half (i.e. the fortnight starting from a full moon and ending on a new moon).

It is only if the study is conducted in accordance with the above *Niyamas* or rules that the full effect of the *Mantras* or what is known as *Mantrasakti* will be obtained.

The *Samskara* of *Upanayana* is also known by another term the *Gurusamipanayana* which brings out the nature of the ceremony more clearly. It means 'sending the child to his *Guru*'. In the course of the *Upanayana* ceremony the young *Dvija* who is being initiated, is made to bind himself to certain rules of conduct which should be observed by

him during his *Brahmacaryāśrama* The following are a few of the *mantras* with the aid of which this is done —

Injunction —' ब्रह्मचार्यसि "
(Thou shalt be a *Brahmacārī*)

Answer —"बाढम् ।"
(I shall)

Injunction — "आचार्याधीनो भव ।"
(Thou shoult be under the protection of thy master)

Answer —"बाढम् ।"
(I shall)

Injunction — 'भिक्षाचर्यं चर ।'
(Thou shalt take alms for thy food)

Answer —'बाढम् ।"
(I shall)

The last of these shows the kind of provision the ancients had made for the maintenance of the teaching class. The injunction was that the disciples under a particular teacher should, during the period of their stay with him, go out and beg for their food, part of which they were to supply to their master Thus the food problem of both the teacher and the taught was solved at the expense of the society at large Other than this the teacher was not to be remunerated during the course of the study

Detailed instructions have been laid down regarding the kind of food which a *Brahmacārī* or the celibate student should take during the period of his study under a teacher For instance, salt was an item which was to be eschewed from his diet On the course being completed, at the time of performing the *Samāvartana* ceremony, the pupil or *Vidyārthī* should offer the *Guru* his fees or *Gurudaksinā*

It is one of the prerogatives of the *Guru* that he could ask of the disciple anything he wants for his fees. If by any chance, the fee asked for is not within the pupil's means, the latter must, at least, beg and obtain the object desired by the *Guru*. It is only when the *Guru's* fees are offered that the *Brahmacārī* is free to marry. So states the *Śruti* text quoted below:—

आचार्याय प्रियं धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सी ।

—*Taittirīya Upaniṣad—Śikṣā Valli*

The foregoing applies to the study of the *Vedas* not only by the *Brāhmaṇa* but by the *Kṣatriya* and the *Vaiśya* also. Thus however rich a man might be by birth, during the period of his study of the *Vedas*, he should stay with the *Guru* and obtain his food through taking alms.

The following are a few of the rules governing the conduct of a *Brahmacārī* during the period of his stay with his *Guru*:—

(i) Besides his *Sandhyās* he should perform the principal *Agni Kārya* prescribed for his *Āśrama* viz. the *Samidādhāna*.

(ii) He should go out and beg for his daily meals, *Bhikṣācarya*.

(iii) He should abstain from taking salt in his food.

(iv) The *Brāhmaṇa* should keep the *Palāśa Daṇḍa* or stick, the *Kṣatriya* the stick of the peepal tree (Ficus religiosa) and the *Vaiśya* that from the Indian fig tree (Ficus indica). This stick is supposed to be a protection for his Vedic treasure.

(v) The *Vedas* should be learnt in strict accordance with the *Niyamas* or rules described in the foregoing para-

graphs —*viz*, the start is on the *upākarma* day, the finish in the sixth month after that and so on

(vi) On the *Upākarma* day the *Brahmacārī* should live merely on *Tila* or gingily and on the next day (*i e* the day of the *Gāyatrī Japa*) perform *Homa* before fire chanting the *Gāyatrī mantra* 1008 times using the *Palāśa* stick for the purpose

A *Brahmacārī* need not restrain himself with regard to the quantity of food he takes during each meal Only, he should not hanker after tasty items of diet Otherwise he should see to it that he keeps perfectly fit so as to be able to cope with his studies

A *Brahmacārī*, if he so desires, may not perform the *Samāvartana* ceremony and thus conclude his stay with the *Guru* but could make that stay lifelong Such a *Brahmacārī* is known as a *Naisthika-Brahmacārī*

The proper age for the *Upanayana* ceremony of a Brāhmin lad is the seventh year of his birth It may also be celebrated at the age of five, when it would become what is known as *Kāmyopanayana* Prior to this ceremony the boy should have acquired a good working knowledge of the Sanskrit language and its literature

II VIVĀHA

The *Brahmacārī* who completes his *Samāvartana* and becomes a *Snātaka* is the person eligible for marriage known as *Vivāha*, in Hindu phraseology The *Samskāra* of *Vivāha* is also known as *Sahadharmacārinī Samprayoga* or the act of finding a partner in life for the purpose of observing the Vedic *Dharmas*

In the two *Āśramas* of *Brahmacarya* and *Sannyāsa*, the fruits of one's *karmas* form one's own property, whereas

those of the *Dharmas* observed during the intervening *Grhasthāśrama* are the joint property of the performer of these rites and his partner in life chosen from the other sex.

A woman, according to the Hindu scriptural texts, has no *dharma* of her own excepting that of *Aupāsana* done during the life-time of her husband

This is the only act of hers which has Vedic sanction behind it The other acts in which pious ladies are seen to indulge, such as going to temples for worship, visiting holy rivers for a dip in their sacred waters, offering *pūjā* to personal gods at home, etc, are mentioned only in the *Purāṇas* This is the reason why the need for performing *Aupāsana* is stressed in our sacred books for otherwise we do not afford our ladies any scope for doing a religious rite. The men at least utter the *Gāyatrī*,—which is the quintessence of the first three *vedas* as seen from its other name *Tripadā Gāyatrī*, the *Atharva Veda* having a *Gāyatrī* of its own—during their daily *Sandhyā* prayers and thus have an opportunity of leading a religious life. In the case of a woman, unless the *Aupāsana* fire is daily kindled in the house, her life within its precincts, as a *Grhiṇī*, fails to have a vedic basis

The Hindu conception of wedlock is a deeply religious one, contemplating, as it does, the union of two members of the opposite sexes for the purpose of a strict observance of the vedic *dharmas*

The previous section in this chapter was devoted to the detailed consideration of the *Saṁskāra* of *Upanayana* According to Manu, one of the principal *Smṛtikāras*, the *Saṁskāra* of *Vivāha* forms the *Upanayana* of the woman The difference between the *Upanayana* of a would-be

Brahmacārī and this so-called *Upanayana* of a girl is that in the case of the latter, the person initiated is "taken to her husband" who fills the place of the *Guru*. The *Sūtra* in which this is stated is given below —

स्त्रीणाम् उपनयनस्थाने विवाह मनुरब्रवीत् ।

—*Manusmṛti*

It thus follows that the proper age for a Hindu girl's marriage is the same as that fixed for a boy's *Upanayana* *viz.*, seven,—the recent legislative measures of Age of Consent and Sarda Acts, notwithstanding!

To push the simile a little further, corresponding to the *Samidādhāna* of a boy, his daily *Agnikārya*, we have for the married girl, her *Gṛha Dharmānuṣṭhāna* or the observance of the household *dharmas*, inclusive of the one vedic *Agnikārya* prescribed for her, *viz.*, the *Aupāsana*.

CHAPTER XXV

VIVĀHA—(IN DETAIL)

The *Vedic Samskāras* which precede *Brahmacarya* in a *Dvija's* life are seven in number, as we have pointed out in previous chapters Those which are performed during the *Brahmacaryāsrama* are six In the next *āsrama*—viz , *Grhasthāśrama*—we have to perform twenty-two more of these rituals These are

(1) *Vivāha*, &

(2) to (22) the three groups of *Yajñas* of seven each The rest out of the total of forty *samskāras* are the five *Pañcamahāyajñas*

In Hinduism different kinds of marriages are recognised, such as, for instance, the following —

(i) the *Asura* type,

(ii) the *Gāndharva* type,

(iii) the *Svayamvara* type,

(iv) the *Paisāca* type,

(v) the *Brāhma* type, and so on The last of these is the one prescribed for the Brāhmin Class In the rest of the types no restriction as to the actual marriageable age is noticed, but in the *Brāhma* type, it is definitely to be a pre-puberty ceremony In other words, the *Kanyā* or the pre-puberty stage of the girl's life is the proper age for her marriage

It is said in the *Sāstras* that three Vedic Deities preside, by turn, over a girl's life The last of these is sup-

posed to hand her over to the care of human beings at the time of her wedlock The first of these deities is *Soma* The girl is said to be under the protecting wings of this heavenly being right from the time of her birth up to the time she first becomes conscious of what it is to be shy. The next *Adhisthānadevatā* to take charge of her is the deity known as *Gandharva* The girl is under his protection from the time she realises shyness (*Lajjā*) upto the time she comes of age or attains her puberty For the first three years after her puberty the deity known as *Agni* takes over charge of her Thereafter her control is supposed to pass to human hands.

The influence of these presiding Deities is also noticeable in the difference in appearance which the girl presents during the respective periods

For instance, in the first of these periods during *Soma's* wardenship, there is just a childish charm noticeable in the young girl's looks In the next period when she comes under *Gandharva's* protecting wings, she exhibits feminine beauty, when *Agni* presides over her features, we notice in her signs of passion or *Kāmāgni* (the fire of passion)

The following quotation from the vedic *mantras* contains a reference to this conception —

सोमः प्रथमो विविदे गन्धर्वो विविद उत्तरः ।
तृतीयो अग्निष्टे पतिस्तुरीयस्ते मनुष्यजा. ॥
सामोऽददद्गन्धर्वाय गन्धर्वोऽददग्नये ।
रयिं च पुत्रांश्चादादग्निर्मह्यमथो इमाम् ॥

—*Vivāha Prayoga Mantra.*

The above quotation also shows that, since the girl has to be given over to human care only after the comple-

tion of the period during which *Agni* is in charge of her, the proper age for the marriage of a girl is definitely after three years after her puberty

This, however, contradicts the view expressed in the previous chapter that *Vivāha* forms the *Upanayana saṁskāra* of a girl, and that, therefore, the proper age for the marriage is the eighth year after her birth Thus we have to look elsewhere within the *Vedas* themselves where we could find an explanation for this contradiction

The rituals connected with the *Brāhma* type of marriage includes a function known as the *Gandharvapūjā* in the course of performing which the following *Mantras* are uttered —

उदीर्ष्वातो विश्वावसो नमसेडामहे त्वा ।
अन्यामिच्छ प्रफर्व्यं सजाया पत्यासृज ।
उदीर्ष्वात पतिवति ह्येषा विश्वावसु नमसा गीर्भिरीट्टे
अन्यामिच्छ पितृषदं व्यक्तां सते भोगो जनुषा तस्य विद्धि।

This states —'(addressing the deity, *Gandharvan*) since this is a *Brāhmavivāha*, you had better leave charge of the girl' It is thus clear that the former applies to all other types of marriage and that the latter to the *Brāhma* type alone Thus there is vedic support for the statement that the proper age for the marriage of a girl other than a Brāhmin girl is three years after her attaining age and that, for a girl of the Brāhmin community, it is before the age of puberty

The idea seems to be that, among the Brāhmins, the girl should be given away in marriage at an age at which she does not fully feel the effects of carnal passion so that her being trained to treat her husband as her only god may be facilitated

The ideal to be aimed at by every Hindu married lady is a strict observance of *Pātivratyadharma* or being dutiful and faithful to one's husband (or *Pati*) Such a dutiful wife is called a *Satī* This term is applied by westerners to the ancient custom among Hindus according to which wives, on being widowed, immolated themselves on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands probably because this custom was observed strictly by most dutiful wives—or *Satīs* One of the names of *Dākṣāyanī*, Śiva's spouse, is *Satī* as the following verse from one of Śankara's works describes —

कलत्रं वैधात्रं कति कति भजन्ते न कवयः
श्रियो देव्याः को वा न भवति पतिः कैरपि धनैः ।
महादेवं हित्वा तव सति सतीनामचरमे
कुचाभ्यामासङ्गः कुरवकतरोरप्यसुलभः ॥

—*Saundaryalaharī*

According to Hindu conceptions the objects in marrying are three in number and are as follows —

(i) that healthy and virtuous children should be produced,

(ii) that the wife, through obtaining a husband should provide herself with a means by which her spiritual salvation could be achieved—*viz*, through an observance of *Pātivratyadharma*, and

(iii) that the husband, for his part, may secure a helpmate with whom he could observe the rules laid down for a *Gṛhastha* or householder and perform the various *Saṃskāras* laid down in the *Vedas*, so that the way for his own spiritual salvation could be paved

The simile frequently employed by the Hindus in describing an ideal pair of husband and wife is that of the

substance and its shadow The wife should always act according to the wishes of her husband in the same way as the shadow follows the substance This *Dharma* of the wife is well described in the following quotation from the *Rāmāyana* of Vālmīki —

पतिव्रता महाभागा छायेवानुगता सदा ।

—*Bāla Kānda*

Pātivratyadharma does not consist merely in bein[g] loyal to one's husband It should go one step beyond tha[t] and treat the husband as the wife's one god on earth Th[e] Hindu *Purānas* and *Itihāsas* bristle with instances, of ver[y] high types of *Satīs*—such as, for instance, *Sītā*, *Draupadi* *Nalāyanī* etc Among these the example of *Nalāyan[ī]* shows that a true *Satī* is one who observes *Pātivratya dharma* even when the husband's actions and mental inclinations are of a disagreeable nature

On their being married to each other, the husband an[d] the wife acquire the marital fire with which they are to perform the daily *Aupāsana* rite This fire, it is stated, shoul[d] be carefully protected by both the husband and the wif[e] In addition to this, it is enjoined that on the days followin[g] the full and the new moon days (*viz*, the *Sukla Pratham[ā]* and the *Krsna Prathamā* days) a rite known as the *Sthāl[ī]pāka* should be performed by the couple The forme[r] can be performed by the wife in the absence of the husband, but the latter should be done only by the husband

Detailed rules have been laid down in our *Kalp[a] Sūtras* for the construction of a *Grhastha's* house, so as t[o] accord with the requirements of the Vedic injunctions

The state of life known as *Grhasthāsrama* is commo[n] to all the four castes Among the forty *Samskāras*, tho[se]

up to *Caula* and the *Aupāsana* and the *Pākayajñas* have been prescribed for the fourth castes of *sūdras* also, in works such as the *Vaidyanātha Dīksitīya* The only difference is that, in their case, in the place of the Vedic *Mantras*, *Slokas* conveying the same meaning are uttered

Thus the need for protecting fire or *Agni* is greatly stressed at several places in our scriptures It is even said that in fire should the Lord *Paramesvara* be worshipped Hence the following *mantra* in the *Vedas* —

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितम् ।
—*Rg Veda*

God is said to manifest Himself in the flame of a burning fire and at a place in South India—Tiruvannāmalai—God Almighty is, to this day, being worshipped as a form of fire In Malabar (*Kerala*) *Śakti* is worshipped in the form of burning lamps and the worship is known as *Bhagavatīsevā*

At present this custom of preserving the household *Fire* is fast dying out among the Hindus excepting in the houses of a few orthodox Brāhmins On the other hand, among the Parsis, to whom the fire is the principal manifestation of God, the custom is still prevalent Even their *mantras*, on a close examination, appear to be mere modifications of our *Srutis* such as अग्निमीळे पुरोहितम् etc The Parsis should really be considered a defunct sect of the *Ksattriyas*, there being recognition of the existence of such groups in our *Sāstras* These defunct groups are described as the *Abhāsas* or Corruptions of the relevant *Varna* For instance, Manu distinctly mentions the *Chinese* and the *Drāvidas* as the *Abhāsas* of the *Ksattriyas* who lost their *Ksattriyahood* through lack of Brāhmin priests who could officiate at their Vedic rites This origin of the Parsis

perhaps accounts for their steadfastly adhering to their worship of the *Vedic* deity of *Agni*.

Among the many benefits accruing from the careful and devoted preservation of the household fire—the *Aupāsana Agni* of the *Gṛhastha*—are mentioned freedom from the influence of evil spirits or *Paiśācas* and an immunity from diseases

While on the subject of *Vivāha* a word or two may not be out of place about some of the modern social evils that have somehow come to be associated with it In the first place, marriage to-day is an expensive affair This is a wholly unśāstraic view of the function According to our sacred books the ceremony of *Vivāha* is an universal one prescribed alike for the rich and the poor, and, as nowhere in our scriptures has a premium been put on the possession of worldly riches, it was certainly not the intention of our ancients that the performance of this essential *samskāra* should be attendant with expenses which would place it beyond the means of certain sections of the people The *samskāra* of *Vivāha* should, therefore, be no more expensive than the offering of the daily *Sandhyā* prayers, both being ordinary Vedic rites One of the common present-day expedients to avoid this expense is to cut down the duration of the ceremony and make it an one-day affair This is highly offensive to the śāstraic injunctions and should never be resorted to If the full religious benefit of the *samskāra* is to be obtained, it should be performed in strict accordance with the teachings of the *Dharma Śāstras* The minimum period of its duration is four days at the end of which, and in the early hours of the fifth day, the concluding ceremony of *Sesa Homa* should be performed A better way of reform would hence be to reduce the

incidental expenses such as are incurred on feasting, the piper, clothes and the like

The demanding of a dowry by the groom's party is another social evil which should and could be eradicated If we ponder over it for a while, we would realise that the whole question is purely a matter of demand and supply In a community in which we find a dearth of boys and abundance of girls the need for paying a price—and a heavy one too—for a suitable bridegroom for one's daughter would necessarily arise By the extent to which we could successfully reverse this proportion the bridegroom would drop in value as a marketable commodity and once the boys outnumber the girls, people would cease to set a value on them Why not then devise ways and means to reduce the output of girls, if we can so put it? To a staunch believer in the teachings of the *Sanātana Dharma* an easy way to achieve this end seems to be as follows It is said in our *Śāstras* that a strict observance of our *ācāras*, as laid down in them, will secure for us freedom from disease and physical debility It is a matter of common observation that to-day, among the Hindus, a greater amount of religiousness is displayed by the women-folk than is seen among the men Does it not follow from these two observations that in these circumstances it is the female sex that will thrive more than the male? If, therefore, our menfolk be made to develop a greater amount of religiosity than now, and lead a life devoted to the strict observance of the rules of conduct laid down in the scriptures, an evenness of balance between the two sexes among our children will be assured and, with it, the evil practice of taking dowries for boys will also vanish!

CHAPTER XXVI

THE RELIGIOUS DUTIES OF A HINDU

The *Śloka* quoted below enumerates the six main *Karmas* a true follower of Hindu Dharma is expected to perform daily —

सन्ध्या स्नान जपो होमो देवताना च पूजनम ।
आतिथ्य वैश्वदेव च षट् कर्माणि दिने दिने ।।

These actions are —

(1) the morning purificatory bath,
(2) *Japa* or meditation,
(3) *Homa* or Fire offering,
(4) the worship of the family deity,
(5) the feeding of guests, and
(6) the special *Homa* of *Vaiśvadeva*

Let us consider these *seriatim*.

When we say that the first daily act of a Hindu is the early morning rinsing of his body, we may appear to be appropriating to the Hindu what is common to every human being on earth The difference, however, consists in the fact that the daily wash of an orthodox Hindu is believed to cleanse him of not only bodily but also of mental dirt With this object in view the bathing is accompanied by the chanting of certain *mantras* The more important of these are the *Aghamarsana Sūktam*, the *Vāsodakam* and the *Śikhodakam* The former is credited with the power of mitigating the effects of our sins and the latter, with that of being helpful to such of our ancestors as happen to be undergoing punishments in hell The

snāna itself should be preceded by the usual *Sankalpa*. The *mantras* forming the *Aghamarsana Sūktam* should be chanted in the course of the bath, the *Vāsodaka mantras* should be uttered while sqeezing the water out of the wet cloth, and the *Sikhodaka mantras*, while removing the water from the tuft of hair on the head.

The second act is the *Sandhyāvandana Japa* or the offering of the daily *Sandhyā* prayers. These prayers are to be offered three times in the course of the day, *viz.*, in the morning, in the middle part of the day and in the evening. Detailed prescriptions have been laid down for the particular period of the day when these oblations are to be offered. As most of us are aware the *Sandhyā* prayer consists of three parts, *viz.*, the first part containing the *Arghya* or water offering, the middle part during which the great *Gāyatrī mantras* are chanted, and the concluding portion marked by what is known as the *Upāsana*. The best time for performing the early *Sandhyāvandana* is just before sunrise. The prayer should be commenced while the last star is still shining in the firmament, the *Arghya* should be offered before the setting of the last star, the *Gāyatrī* meditation should be concluded before sunrise and the *Upāsana* part of the *Samskāra* done immediately after it. Thus the best time for offering the early morning *Arghyas* is while yet the last star in the sky is shining but before sunrise, doing it exactly at the time of sunrise is only next best, and their being offered after sunrise is the worst time for doing it.

About the number of times the *Gāyatrī* is to be chanted a similar grading has been laid down, as mentioned in the following quotation from the *Śruti* —

सहस्रपरमा देवी शतमध्या दशावरा ।

—*Taittirīyāranyaka*

It follows from this that the chanting of these *mantras* a thousandfold each time produces the best results, doing the same a hundred times is only the next best and that if we do it but ten times on each occasion, the results obtained therefrom will only be third-rate in kind

Before proceeding to a study of the other two *Sandhyā* prayers of the day, it would be as well if we know something about the Hindu way of reckoning time The period of time elapsing between early dawn (*i e*, roughly a couple of hours before actual sunrise) and sunset is divided into six periods or *Kālas* which are as follow —

(i) the *Usahkāla*,

(ii) the *Prātahkāla*,

(iii) the *Saṅgavakāla*

(iv) the *Mādhyāhnikakāla*,

(v) the *Aparāhnakāla*,

(vi) the *Sāyankāla*

The first of these consists of five *nālikais* and the rest are six *nālikais* each in duration, a *nālikai*, the Hindu unit of time, being a period of 24 minutes in the 'F P S.' scale of units The proper time for performing the midday *Sandhyā* is the *Mādhyāhnikakāla* or, roughly 'between half past ten in the morning and one O'clock in the afternoon'. The above divisions of time in the Hindu reckoning would correspond to the following parts of the day in the English scale —

(i) the *Usahkāla*—two hours before sunrise, or, roughly, 4 A.M to 6 A M

(ii) the *Prātahkāla*—6 A M to 8-24 A M.

(iii) *Saṅgavakāla*—8-24 A M to 10-48 A M

(iv) the *Mādhyāhnikakāla*—10-48 A M to 1-12 P M

(v) the *Aparāhnakāla*—1-12 P M to 3-36 P.M.

(vi) the *Sāyankāla*—3-36 P M. to 6 P M. (sunset) *

The following table shows the proper time in terms of the above reckoning for the performing of the various *Samskāras* which a twice-born is expected to do everyday

1 The *Usahkālā*

Snāna and the first part of the morning *Sandhyā*. The *Snāna* referred to here is the usual bath for the day and not the special purificatory baths prescribed for specific occasions

2 The *Prātahkāla*

The rest of the *Sandhyāvandana* and the *Aupāsana Homa* for all and the *Brahmayajña* for those belonging to the *Āśvalāyana Sūtra*

3 The *Sangavakāla*

The various *Prāyaścittas* and *Homas*, *Ksaura* or shave and the purificatory *Snāna* connected therewith, the *Abhyanganasnāna* or oil bath and every other act purificatory in nature Thus the *Gāyatrījapa* done sometimes not as part of the daily *Sandhyā*, but as an act of *Prāyaścitta* or purification should be done during this period

4 The *Mādhyāhnikakāla*

The *Brahmayajña* of *Āpastamba Sūtrakāras* and *Bhojana* or midday meal

5 The *Aparāhnakāla*

All *Pitr karmas* such as, for instance, the *Śrāddha*, as opposed to the *Daivakarmas* for which the *Sangavakāla* is the proper time

* The timings given above are only approximate

Near Vallam, in South India, the *Āditya* pebbles are found The *Svarnamukhī* stones represent the *Ambikā* These stones have a shining gold line inside The river *Śonabhadra* flowing into the Ganges abounds in red stones which are believed to represent *Ganeśa* All these are shapeless

The *Vaiśvadeva* ritual contains two of the *Pañcamahāyajñas* viz, *Devayajña* and *Bhūtayajña* The former occurs in the course of it and the latter, in the food offerings which form its concluding part Of the remaining three viz, *Pitryajña, Brahmayajña* and *Manusyayajña,* the last is the *Ātithya* rite or the feeding of guests referred to above The first is the offering of the *tila* grain and water to the souls of the departed and forms the *Tarpana* ritual performed on the new moon and other specified days The second viz, *Brahmayajña* is the similar offering intended for the *Rsis* or ancient seers who have secured for us the Vedic texts

Thus the principal *karmas* a true follower of Hindu Dharma is expected daily to perform are *Snāna, Sandhyāvandana japa, Devatāpūjā* and the *Pañcamahāyajñas*

There are also certain exceptions to the precepts detailed above regarding the proper time for the performance of these daily *karmas* On the *Dvādaśī* day, the midday meal should be taken during the *Prātahkāla* before 8-24 A M On these days the midday *Sandhyā* prayers should be done during the *Prātahkāla* instead of, as usual, during the *Mādhyahnikakāla* During the month of *Dhanus* the *Devapūjā* may be performed in the *Usahkāla* Besides this the ordinary *pūjā* should also be done in the *Mādhyāhnikakāla* as usual

All the above rites may be performed by all excepting *Aupāsana* which should be done only by those whose wives are alive The significance in first offering to God the food which we subsequently take lies in the fact that by doing so we are reminding ourselves that we owe our food to Him Can a Scientist create a crop of rice or any other vegetable plant? The idea that the Almighty is the giver of all things is conveyed in the *śloka* of the Gītā reproduced below —

इष्टान् भोगान् हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥

—*The Bhagavad Gītā, III, 12*

Before concluding this chapter it may be worth while to refer to a common doubt that raises itself in the minds of most of us It is frequently asked how the food and water offered by us on the *Śrāddha* days can possibly reach the spirits of the ancestors for whom they are intended While putting this question to the believing Hindu the unbeliever cites the following incident attributed to Guru Nanak's life. It is said that the Sikh Guru, while at Haridwar in the course of his tours, met a group of pious believing Hindu devotees who were engaged in performing *Tarpana* to their dead ancestors On seeing this Nanak took a vessel and started to pour the water of the Ganges on the steps of the river bank One of the Brāhmins, seeing this apparently mad act, wanted to know why the Guru was so engaged Guru Nanak, in reply, said that in his part of the country there was a failure of rain and that therefore he was trying to send water to his crops by pouring it on these foot-steps On being asked how he could sensibly expect that water to reach his fields so many miles away, the Guru is said to have replied that his belief was as rea-

sonable as that of those very Brāhmins who expected their offerings of *tila* and water to go to their dead ancestors! In the face of such doubts, the unbeliever asks, how can one be expected to perform the *Tarpaṇa* and the *Śrāddha* rites

The analogy of the modern telegraphic money order affords us the most fitting explanation of this doubt

We deposit the money with the official in the post office and obtain a receipt for it We see him lock the money up in his box in our very presence, so that we are not left in any doubt about that money remaining in that post office itself We still know that the money has reached its destination A messenger in the shape of the electric energy has taken the money to the person for whom it was intended Similarly the Hindus believe that certain messengers appointed by God, who are called *Vasu-rudra-ādityas* and are classed as *Pitṛdevatās*, see to it that all the offerings made by us are properly sent to the respective *Pitṛs*

The performance of these rites according to the religious laws enunciated in the scriptures is essential even as compliance with the regulations of the Postal department is necessary or the correct and safe transaction of our Postal business

CHAPTER XXVII

YAJÑAS—HAVIS AND SOMA

We have already seen that the first few *Samskāras* in the life of a twice-born are to be performed by his parents, the first three while he is still in the shape of a foetus in the mother's womb and a few others after his birth but before he comes of age The first *Samskāra* to be done by himself is *Upanayana* This is followed by the ritual of *Sahadharmacāriṇīsamprayoga* known in common language as marriage or *vivāha* When he gets settled in life as a *grhastha* he has his daily rites to be performed starting from the morning bath or *Snāna* and ending in the evening *Sandhyā* prayers These daily rites include the *Pañcamahāyajñas*

Before proceeding to the subject matter of the present chapter we may relevantly mention a few more details regarding some of the daily actions of a *sanātani* As part of the observance of *Śauca* or bodily purity it is enjoined in the *Dharma Śāstras* that everyone of us should have a separate *Jalapātra* or drinking vessel and that we should drink out of no other utensil While bathing we should rub our body with ordinary earth or *mrttikā* It is claimed that earth and water give the best cleansing to the human body. The efficacy of wet earth as a washing material is referred to in the following line from the *Śruti*.—

मृत्तिके हन मे पापम् ।

—*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*,

The use of earth for bathing is, at the present moment, confined only to northern India, it having died out in the south

Great stress is laid in our sacred books on the advisability of gargling and rinsing our mouths as often as possible The proper observance of the teachings in this respect is supposed to keep us free from the various diseases of the teeth Gargling is credited with the power of keeping our digestive system in perfect order

In the same way as we do the *samskāras* such as *snāna* accompanied by *mantras*, even so there are *mantras* prescribed for acts such as the smearing of the body with the sacred ash or *vibhūti* The following are the *mantras* which should be uttered on that occasion —

त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम् ।
उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय मामृतात् ।

—*Taittirīyasamhitā*

त्रियायुषं जमदग्नेः । कश्यपस्य त्रियायुषम् । अगस्त्यस्य त्रियायुषम् । यद्देवानां त्रियायुषम् तन्मे अस्तु त्रियायुषम् ।

—*Taittirīyasamhithā*

The above *mantras* are intended to be chanted during the actual process of smearing Even while taking the ash in the hand prior to wearing it a *mantra* is to be uttered and it is as follows —

अग्निरिति भस्म, वायुरिति भस्म, जलमिति भस्म, स्थलमिति भस्म, व्योमेति भस्म, सर्वं ह वा इदं भस्म मन इति एतानि चक्षूंषि भस्मानि ।

—*Jābāla Upanisad*

This *mantra* has the lofty philosophical meaning that every thing on earth is, on final analysis, but a handful of ashes.

The fire of the *grhastha's* household kindled at the time of his marriage should be kept alive till the time of the final annihilation of his body on the funeral pyre and, till then, should be preserved by the daily *aupāsana* ritual Once every fifteen days it should be supplemented by the *Sthālīpāka* ritual in order to augment the efficacy of the fire, With the aid of this household or *aupāsana* fire six *karmas* should be performed in the course of the year. The chief of these are —

(i) the *Caitrī* in the month of *Caitra*,

(ii) the *Āśvayujī* in the month of *Āśvayuja*,

(iii) the *Āgrahāyanī* in the month of that name,

(iv) certain offerings or *balis* to snakes in the month of *Śrāvaṇa*, and

(v) the *Astakā Śrāddhas* to be performed on each *Astamī* day in the last four months of the Hindu year

Then follows the ritual known as *Agnihotra.* The period in one's life during which this should be performed is any time after a son is born but before the hairs on the head turn grey. If one does not beget a male issue one is declared ineligible for performing the *Agnihotra Samskāra.*

This ritual of *Agnihotra* brings us to the subject-matter of the present chapter, being itself one of the *Haviryajñas*. *Agnyādhāna* is the name given to the preliminary ritual which precedes *Agnihotra* The *Agnihotra* fire is lit during the performance of the preparatory *Samskāra* of *Agnyādhāna*, which, therefore, stands in the same relationship to *Agnihotra* as *vivāha* does to *Aupāsana*

Thus the first two *Haviryajñas* are the *Agnyādhāna* and the *Agnihotra* rites. The remaining five are *darśa-*

pūrnamāsa, *Agrahāyanī*, *Cāturmāsya*, *Pāśubandha* and *Sautrāmanī* The *Cāturmāsya* ritual of the *grhastha* should be preceded by a triad of vedic rites known as the *Tretāgni*, the individual rituals composing it being the *Āhavanīya*, the *Gārhapatya* and the *Daksināgni*

Cāturmāsya and *Sautrāmanī* may be performed as often as one feels inclined to The rest are to be done less often than these

Yajñas are the same as *Yāgas* and are of three types. In the *vedas* as many as 400 of these *Yāgas* are referred to, but the particular works in which the details regarding these are to be found are the various *Kalpasūtras*

According to the Sāstras every Brāhmin is expected to perform 21 of these *Yāgas* These are the seven *Pāka Yajñas*, the seven *Hāvir Yajñas* and the seven *Soma Yajñas* In describing these *Yāgas*, the authors of the various texts have selected some as representative types and have described them in the minutest degree of detail from start to finish While describing the remaining rituals certain essentials alone are mentioned and for the rest of the details we are merely referred to the description of the particular type which these follow The former are known as *Prāhrti Yāgas* and the latter, *Vikrti Yāgas* Thus among the *Pāka Yagas*, *Sthālipāka* is the *Prākrti* and the remaining ones are its *Vikrtis*. Similarly, among the *Hāvir Yajñas*, *Darśapūrnamāsa* is the *Prākrti* and the rest, its *Vikrtis*

Of the seven *Soma Yāgas Agnistoma* is at the commencement of the series and *Vājapeya* comes at the end. Those who perform the former are called *Somayājis* and those who perform the latter, *Vājapeyis* According to Hindus all the wealth of a Brāhmin is expected to be spent

entirely on a *Soma Yāga* Indeed there is hardly any excuse for the hoarding of worldly riches by a Brāhmin if it is not to be so utilised Two of the *dravyas* essential for a *Somayāga* are the *soma* plant and *Krsnājina* At the present moment in South India these two materials are supplied to intending *Somayājis* by the *Rājā* of Kollengode in Malabar. *Agnistoma*, the first of the *Soma Yāgas*, is also generally known as the *Soma Yāga* and is the *Prakrti Yāga* of the group *Jyotistoma*, another *yāga* of this group, is to be done but once in one's life-time

We may next pass on to the general question of the very utility of these *Yajñas* In this context the *Upanisad* says —

तमेत वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसा-नाशकेन ।

—*Brhadāranyakopanisad*

The gist of this text is that he who wishes to know Godhead should perform *yajña* and observe *Upavāsas* or fasts in a truly dedicatory spirit The details regarding the *prayoga* or actual performance of these *Yajñas* are found in the *Pūrvamīmāmsā* and in the *Karmakānda* of the *Vedas* whereas in the *Uttaramīmāmsā* and in the *Upanisads* the efficacy of these rituals is discussed Hence we can reasonably expect some light on the doubt under discussion—*viz*, whether the sacrifice of animals which the performance of these *Yāgas* involve is a sinful act or not—to be thrown by the texts of *Uttaramīmāmsā* Says Vyāsa in the *Brahma Sūtras* —

अशुद्धमिति चेन्न शब्दात् ।

This *Sūtra* means that the purity or impurity of our deeds should be judged by whether the acts are sanctioned by the *Vedas* or not Since these *Yāgas* are Vedic *Samskāras*,

and the animals sacrificed are first dedicated to the Lord, their performance is not to be considered impure

Some of the *nāstikas* who argue against the performance of *Yajñas* quote in their support the following verse from the ancient tamil work *Tirukkuṟal* —

Aviśorindu āyiram vēttaliṉ oṉṟaṉ
Uyir śekuttu uṇṇāmai naṉṟu

A free translation of this stanza would run as follows —

"A vegetarian life which does not harm a single living object is far better than the slaughter of animals at a thousand sacrificial fires"

This verse is interpreted as a condemnation of the performance of Vedic sacrificial rituals When, however, it is remembered that this verse occurs in the first part of *Kuṟal* which is devoted to the life of an ascetic it is easy to make out the real meaning of this couplet To a *sannyāsī* abstention from the taking of life is the highest of virtues. Besides, as only like can be compared with like, the performance of Vedic sacrifices as well as the strict observance of *ahimsā*, the two acts taken up for comparison in this verse, should both be considered as virtuous deeds, the one, however, being superior to the other from a particular view of life As another instance of one good act being compared with another, the following quotation from the *Upanisads* may be cited —

अहिंसन् सर्वभूतान्यन्यत्र तीर्थेभ्यः ।

—*Chāndogya*

As further evidence of the fact that Vedic sacrifices have not been condemned in Tamil literature any number of quotations can be had from the works of the ancient Hindu Śaivaite and Vaisnavaite devotees wherein these [illegible] referred to even in appreciative terms.

Of the seven *Hāvir Yajñas*, it is only in *Paśubhanda* that an animal has to be sacrificed. In *agnyādhāna*, *agnihotra*, *darśapūrnamāsa* and others, there is no sacrifice All the *Soma Yāgas*, however, involve the offering of animals

A true *sanātani* should, therefore, perform all these *yāgas* which form part of the forty *Samskāras* prescribed for a *dvija* In addition to these he should also exhibit the following eight *ātmagunas* or virtuous qualities in his deeds, as prescribed in the *Dharma Sāstras*

(i) *Dayā* or mercy,
(ii) Patience,
(iii) Absence of jealousy,
(iv) Bodily purity,
(v) Freedom from obstinacy,
(vi) Happiness of mind,
(vii) Liberality, &
(viii) Freedom from greed

CHAPTER XXVIII

SANDHYĀVANDANA

In the *Dhanurveda* weapons of destruction are divided into two classes, *viz.*, *astras* and *śastras* While the latter are actual implements of war such as the bow and arrow, the former are merely effusions of *mantras* credited with the power of destruction The *arghya* which forms an important part of the Brāhmin's *sandhyā* rite is one such instance of the flinging of an *astra* or destructive *mantra*. The enemy aimed at is the horde of evil spirits or *asuras* who fill our minds with all sorts and kinds of temptations By throwing into the air water from out of the cup formed by scooping together the two palms of the hand, accompanied by the uttering of the *gāyatrīmantra*, one is expected to do the destructive deed described above This *astraprayoga* the Brāhmin is expected to do three times in the course of every day.

If this *arghyaprayoga* is to be efficacious it should be accompanied by a high degree of mental purity and concentration This is attained by the process of breath control which is known as *Prāṇāyāma* and which also occurs in the course of *sandhyāvandana* *Yogābhyāsa* which aims at a perfect state of mind control is but an extended course of this exercise of *prāṇāyāma*

The *sandhyā* prayer or meditation consists of the following parts —

(i) *Sankalpa*,
(ii) *Mārjana*,
(iii) *Prāśana*,

(iv) *Arghyapradāna*,
(v) *Japa*,
(vi) *Stotra*, and
(vii) *Abhivādana*

These are to follow each other in the order mentioned. The *samskāra* should be dedicated to Lord *Parameśvara*. This is what is intended in the *sankalpa* part of the prayer.

The various sins committed by us are the result of actions by both thought, word and deed The expiatory actions too should be through thought, word and deed The *sandhyā* prayer, as an expiatory act, does exactly this. Hence the following in our *dharma śāstras* —

ऋषयो दीर्घसन्ध्यत्वाद्दीर्घमायुरवाप्नुयुः ।
प्रज्ञां यशश्च कीर्तिं च ब्रह्मवर्चसमेव च ॥

—*Manusmrti*, 4-94.

The uttering of the *mantras* is an action by the word, the meditation of the *gāyatrī* is mental and the performance of the parts such as *mārjana* involve action by the body Viewed from another standpoint the *sandhyā* prayer may also be treated as an act both of *bhaktiyoga*, *karmayoga* and *jñānayoga*

The last part of the *sandhyā*, the *abhivādana*, contains a brief reference to the pedigree of the performer. A few of the more important *Rsis* who come in the line of his descent are named in it Thus those belonging to the *Śrīvatsa* clan mention the five *Rsis*, *Bhārgava*, *Cyavana*, *Apnavāna*, *Aurva* and *Jamadagni* The *Kaundinya* tribe mention the sages *Vasistha*, *Maitrāvaruna* and *Kaundinya* as having appeared in their lineage

CHAPTER XXIX

GĀYATRĪ

The word *Gāyatrī* means that which protects one who sings it. The is the definition contained in the quotation given below —

गायन्त त्रायते यस्माद्गायत्रीत्यभिधीयते ।

The singing referred to in this definition denotes the uttering of it with faith and devotion. In the *Vedas* the following definition is given of the *Gāyatrīmantra* —

गायत्रीं छन्दसां माता ।

The word *chandas* occurring in this quotation means the *Vedas* themselves, so that, by this definition, the *Gāyatrī* becomes the mother of all the Vedic *mantras*. The chanting of the *Gāyatrī* which precedes the performance of most of the vedic *saṁskāras* should be done with the utmost purity of body and mind. The need for preserving bodily purity is stressed in the following quotation —

देहो देवालयः प्रोक्तो जीव प्रोक्त सनातन ।

This quotation compares the human body to a temple and says that even as no impure person should enter a temple, no impure object should find entrance into our body. This explains the strict injunctions in the matter of diet which have been laid down for a Brāhmin, whose duty it is to preserve the efficacy of the vedic *mantras*. He is expected to preserve in him the fire of religiousness by a strict observance of the various vedic *karmas* prescribed in our

scriptures At the present moment several sparks of this fire the Brāhmin has allowed to die out due to non-performance of the various *yajñas* It is hence doubly incumbent on him not to extinguish the last flickering spark in it by giving up the performance of the *Gāyatrī* It is said that once the *Gāyatrījapa* is not performed in a *Brāhmin's*, a *ksattriya's*, or a *vaiśya's* family for three generations on end, that family loses irretrievably its Brāhmin-hood, ksattriya-hood or vaiśya-hood, as the case may be

It may relevantly be mentioned in this context that the time selected for each of the *sandhyā* prayers of the day is the most appropriate one for the purpose These fall at a period of the day when the mind is likely to be in a state of peace Early morning, which is the proper time for the morning *sandhyā* prayer, the mind is fresh and peaceful, we having just got up from sleep At midday—the time fixed for the next *sandhyā* prayer—we feel tired after the forenoon's work so that the mind as well as the body are both in a state of rest, which is one form of peacefulness At eventide when we are expected to do the evening *sandhyā* prayers, the body is again tired after the day's work and is preparing itself for the night's rest and the mind is therefore once again in a state of rest

It is said that during these prayers the deity of *Gāyatrī* should be worshipped as *Gāyatrī*, *Sāvitrī* and *Sarasvatī* respectively As the morning, the midday and the evening are the parts of the day during which Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva are the respective predominating deities, the goddess of *Gāyatrī* during the three *Sandhyā* prayers should be contemplated as *Visnurūpinī*, *Brahmarūpinī* and *Śivarūpinī*, respectively

The *Gāyatrīmantra* is supposed to be the quintessence of all the *mantras* which occur in the *vedas*. Along with *Arghya*, *Gāyatrījapa* forms the most essential part of the *Samskāra* of *Sandhyāvandana*. These should always be done by every twice-born irrespective of whether the other vedic rituals are done or not. Even when one is ill the *Gāyatrī* should be chanted at least by proxy.

The uttering of *Gāyatrī* is prescribed only for men. Women are not expected to do it. The *japa* done by the husband is, however, believed to protect the wife also.

Each *mantra* in the *vedas* is credited with certain direct results the attainment of which is the object aimed at by those who chant it. Indirectly, however, every *mantra* is expected to lead ultimately to mental purification. In the case of *Gāyatrī*, however, purification of the mind is the direct and immediate result.

As stated in the following text from the *Dharmaśāstras*, viz.,

त्रिभ्य एव तु वेदभ्य: पादं पादमदूदुहम् ।

—*Manusmṛti*

the *Gāyatrīmantra* is taken from the three vedas, *Rg*, *Yajus* and *Sāma* and is the essence of these *śakhās*. It is, therefore, prescribed for the followers of these three branches of the *Vedas*. The *Atharvaveda* has a separate *Gāyatrīmantra* of its own. Hence those belonging to the first three *śākhās*, if they wish to study the *Atharvaveda* texts, should, as a preliminary step, perform a second *Upanayana* ceremony during which they should learn the *Gāyatrī* of the *Atharvaveda* and then only commence the study of the scriptures of that *veda*. Similarly an *Atharvavedin* wishing to learn the texts of the other *vedas* should first learn their *Gāyatrī* through a sparate *Upanayanasamskāra*.

CHAPTER XXX

MANUSYADHARMAS

It is a common feature of all living beings in this world that they are always doing some kind of act or other every moment of their existence Whether it be the ant or the snail, the bird or the beast, we always see these living creatures engaged in work Man who is also an animal in God's creation, is no exception to this rule Hence the following *śloka* in the Lord's song —

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

—*Bhagavad Gītā*, III, 5

Let us pause for a moment and consider why such a state of affairs should at all exist A little reflection will make us realise that the prime cause which makes the living beings of this world engage themselves in ceaseless toil is hunger It is this never-ending search for food that acts as the inner urge for the various activities of man In fact the influence of this driving force is so strong that it is indeed difficult for one to remain without work even for a single moment. Hunger is thus a great disease in quest of the remedy for which mankind is ever engaged, but unlike other diseases which are cured by the remedy, this disease of hunger is never cured Food, its remedy, when once offered, only makes it ask for more

The actions which man performs can be divided into a number of classes Those activities which immediately

concern the well-being of his own body form one group Those which are done in the interests of his dependants and friends form another Yet another class are those which relate to the animals under his charge, *viz*, his cattle, and his property Then come those activities, which are intended to promote the prosperity and well-being of the village in which he lives And so the circle spreads so as to comprise his district, his province, his country and so forth Thus actions such as the daily wash, cleaning of one's teeth and clothing and the like come under the first category and the building of a house, keeping it clean and such other actions come under the second class Let us analyse these actions of man a little further

The three things which man requires essentially in this world are food, clothing and shelter. Most of his actions naturally therefore relate to the procuring of these Some of the other actions which at first sight do not seem to conform strictly to these, will be seen to relate to the acquiring of the object of food, clothing and shelter for some of his dependants or for others in whom he is in some way interested

Besides, if hunger is a disease, we should only try to secure as much of the remedy as would just appease it, but we endeavour to hoard much more than what is really necessary to appease our hunger, though in the case of the other diseases of the body no one is seen to take more medicine than is actually prescribed, even when it addresses quite satisfactorily to the palate Great men have, however, taught us to secure just as much as we require to satisfy these three principal needs and nothing more Compare, for instance, the teaching of *Sankara* in the verse quoted below —

क्षुद्व्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यतां प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां
स्वाद्वन्नं न तु याच्यतां विधिवशात्प्राप्तेन संतुष्यताम् ।
शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथावाक्यं समुच्चार्यताम्
औदासीन्यमभीप्स्यतां जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् ॥

—*Sādhanapañcaka, śloka*

The actions enumerated above may, at least with little stretch of imagination, be related to the three primary needs of man referred to above, but we also see him engaged in a host of others the direct bearing of which on the acquisition of these primary objects of want is not easily clear to us. Under this category may be enumerated actions such as the wearing of a caste mark, going to temples or other places of worship, feeding of *Brāhmins*, performing of *śrāddhas*, and so on and so forth. As, apparently, these actions are not related to the acquiring of food, clothing and shelter and do not, therefore, seem to have any concern with our well-being in this world, are they to be considered unnecessary and useless?

The reply of *Sanātana Dharma* to this question is in the negative. It is common experience that in seeking for food we not only try to satisfy our immediate needs, but also attempt to think of the morrow and provide for the same. Likewise the actions referred to in the last of the categories enumerated above are supposed to make provision for the welfare of the soul in the next birth. Non-believers may ask whether there is at all a life after death. Let us, for argument's sake, admit that there is no life after death. The *āstika* who, believing in the existence of one such, has devoted some thought to it in this life, loses nothing thereby. At the worst, he has only wasted some thought and time on it in this life. Let us take the other

possibility of there being a life after death The *āstika* by his forethought has already made provision for it and benefits by it The *nāstika*, on the other hand suffers. This is the argument of the *śloka* given below :—

नास्ति चेन्नास्ति नो हानिः अस्ति चेन्नास्तिको हतः ।

The Christian religion does not profess to believe in the theory of *Karma* and the doctrine of rebirth, but an impartial examination of their views does reveal that they do believe in the *karma* theory in a modified form They say that after death the souls reside in the graves until the day of Judgment when sentences regarding the punishments they are to undergo are delivered In order to go through those punishments, they take on new bodies Does this view not approximate to our own view of the operation of *karma*?

To put it in the language of science the Hindu doctrine of *karma* is but an expression in the region of theology of Newton's law that action and reaction are equal and opposite

Thus in the Hindu view of life the performance of good deeds or *Dharma* would secure sufficient protection in this world and happiness in the next Hence it is that *Kausalyā* says to her son on the eve of the latter's departure for the jungle that she is trusting to his *Dharma* giving him sufficient protection during his fourteen years' stay in the forests

यं पालयसि धर्मं त्वं धृत्या च नियमेन च ।
स वै राघवशार्दूल धर्मस्त्वामभिरक्षतु ॥

—*Vālmīki's Ayodhyākāṇḍa*, 25-3.

The efficacy of a strict observance of *Dharma* is also emphasised in the following quotation.—

यान्ति न्यायप्रवृत्तस्य तिर्यञ्चोऽपि सहायताम् ।
अपन्थानं तु गच्छन्तं सोदरोऽपि विमुञ्चति ॥

—*Anargharāghavanātaka*, I-4

which says that the virtuous life of *Srī Rāma* endowed even the monkeys of the forests with great powers of physical might, whereas all the unequalled powers of *Rāvana* were set at naught by his record of misdeeds.

To sum up, the procuring of the three necessities of life *viz*, food, clothing and shelter, leads man to engage himself in endless activities. In addition to the actions, which are devoted to these he must also try to do some good deeds or acts of *dharma* with a view to securing happiness in the life after the present one. In choosing to do this a true Hindu should try to follow the path of his ancestors and lead the life of virtue which they have lived in the past. Such a life is bound to bring him happiness and peace of mind on either side of death

CHAPTER XXXI

THE HINDU CONCEPTION OF SIN

There are two terms in the Sanskrit language viz., *Punya* and *Pāpa* for which appropriate synonyms are lacking in English. The latter may be considered to be equivalent to the word *sin* but the meaning of the former cannot be conveyed to English readers through a single expression. It can only be described. It is the opposite of sin and is therefore sinlessness, but it is also something more than that. It is the positive act of doing good or performing *dharma*.

To the Hindu sin is committed in a number of ways. It is committed by both thought, word and deed and with the aid of money. The uttering of a lie is a sin committed by word of mouth. Likewise do we perform countless sinful deeds through the other agencies mentioned above.

In the previous chapter we saw that, in addition to performing actions which aim at the acquiring of food, clothing and shelter we are seen to engage ourselves in various other deeds. Most of these latter kind of actions come under the category of *dharma* or good deeds. Thus, temple-going, charity, meditation and prayer are all acts of *dharma*.

One thing that strikes us as being strange about our acts of *punya* and *pāpa* is that though so many of our acts are sinful in nature, yet it is never the sincere desire of a human being to do sin for the mere sake or pleasure of it. We all certainly desire to do good, but it just happens that

we also commit many an act of sin! Hence the following *śloka*:—

पुण्यस्य फलमिच्छन्ति पुण्यं नेच्छन्ति मानवाः ।
न पापफलमिच्छन्ति पाप कुर्वन्ति यत्नतः ॥

It is said in the *Vedas* that the best antidote for the sin committed by us is the performing of *dharma* Says the *Śruti* —

धर्मेण पापम् अपनुदति ।

—*Mahānārāyanopanisad*

It is sometimes asked whether there is any hope of redemption for a man who, all through his life, has been committing only sin In other words is once fallen fallen for ever? The scriptures are quite emphatic in their reply to this question. They say that every sinner will be saved, provided he genuinely atones for it and performs good deeds The following are the assurances, on this point given to Arjuna by the Lord —

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिन संतरिष्यसि ॥

—*Gītā*, IV, 36

"Even the worst among sinners can cross the ocean of sin with the aid of the boat of *jñāna* or true knowledge"

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ।

—*Gītā*, XVIII, 66

"I shall deliver you from all sins Despair not!" As we have seen earlier in this chapter no one desires to commit sin, still most of our actions are sinful in nature. Which is it then that makes us swerve from the right path against our wishes? Thousands of years

ago this question has been put by Arjuna to the Lord of the *Gītā* —

> अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुष ।
> अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजित ॥
>
> —*Gītā*, III, 36

And here is the Lord's answer to it —

> काम एष: क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भव. ।
> महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥
>
> —*Gītā*, III, 37

One of the attributes of the human mind is its capacity to *desire* for a thing. This *desire* is known as *kāma*. As soon as the mind is seized with the desire to have a thing, it sets about to acquire it. If it fails to attain it through right means, it has recourse to foul methods. The actions performed at that moment become acts of sin. Thus *desire* or *kāma* is seen to be at the root of all our sinful deeds. Again, when goaded by *desire*, the mind is engaged in its attempts to secure the object of that desire, it sometimes happens that something stands in its way and frustrates its efforts. This gives rise to feelings of *rage* (*krodha*) and *hatred* in the mind and we are driven to do some harm against the obstructor—another act of sin. *Kāma* may thus be considered as being reflected into *krodha* in some circumstances. The following is what the commentator says on these two verses of the *Gītā* —

> काम स एष प्रतिहत केनचित् क्रोधत्वेन परिणमते ।
>
> —*Gītābhāsya*

It is like a reflected ball. When it leaves our hands it is *kāma*. When it strikes the wall and rebounds, it returns as *krodha*. Unfulfilled *desire* exhibits itself as *anger* and *hatred*.

One of the best similes used in describing *kāma* or *desire* is the likening of it to fire Fire feeds only to spread and feed more Similarly, desire, once satisfied, only begets fresh longings The simile is also apt in another—a more beautiful—way Fire is also known as *Krsnavartmā*, a term which means that it leaves a trail of blackness behind (meaning the burnt ashes) Likewise, *kāma* also drags behind it an endless chain of misery and woe!

Krodha is even more destructive, being one step more advanced than *kāma* The author of *Naisadha* brings out this conception in the following *śloka* —

दुर्गं कामाशुगेनापि दुर्लङ्घ्यमवलम्ब्य यः ।
दुर्वासोहृदय लोकान् सान्द्रानपि दिधक्षति ॥

—*Naisadhakāvya*, XVII, 21

In this *śloka kāma* and *krodha* are described as the commanders-in-chief in the army of *Kali* or Saturn It is further said that there is no place into which *kāma* cannot force an entrance On the other hand *krodha's* stronghold is so secure that even *kāma* cann find entry into it

Thus the two enemies which goad us to acts of sin are *kāma* and *krodha* and these are the products of the *rājasic* aspect of the mind

It was said in the foregoing paragraphs that we are committing sin through the four agencies, word, deed, thought and money The expiatory acts of *dharma* should also be done through these agencies For instance, with the aid of the tongue we should sing the praise of God, with the aid of the mind we should meditate on Him and do similar acts through the other agencies also

For ladies devotion to their husbands is quite enough *dharma* As a matter of fact, there is no need for them to do any other act of *dharma*, if this one is observed scrupulously This should not be taken as meaning that women are forbidden from doing other acts of *dharma*, but what is emphasised is that *patibhakti* or service and devotion to the husband is their first and foremost *dharma*

There is one other benefit that accrues from the avoiding of sin and doing good deeds By eschewing sinful acts we kill *desire* and *anger* in us and this developes a state of mental fearlessness In course of time the mind gets so hardened that, at the time of death, it feels the least perturbed about it It finds itself as hard and unassailable as a rock and conforms to the following description in the *Gītā*

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन
भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्
स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥

—*Gītā* VIII, 10

In the olden days when Hindu kings ruled the land, there was no fear about *dharma* being neglected, because the people enjoyed a good deal of patronage from the sovereign In these days when government is conducted on entirely different lines and according to conceptions totally different from those of the past, the people have to shift for themselves to find the means to do *dharma* This need not, however, act as a deterrent, because, if only we have the will, we can certainly manage to set apart a fraction of our earnings to be spent on charity and the

like It should thus be the endeavour of everyone to do as much of *dharma* as his means would permit. The number of good deeds coming under *dharma* which a man can do is limitless and range from the giving of alms to the needy to the building of temples, sinking of public wells and starting schools If only there is the will to do so, one would certainly find in this list items quite within one's purse

Go-Saṃrakṣaṇa or cow protection is a positive *dharma* which a Hindu is expected to do This is an act which every one in the Hindu fold can undertake The greatness of this animal is testified to by the fact that it is held in the same high esteem by Buddhists and Jains We said in one of the earliest chapters of this book that the cow is highly venerated by Hindus and cited the following in support of this view —

(i) In every Hindu temple at the end of the day's *pūjā* we pray for the special protection of cows

(ii) In a crucial test between the Tamil Saint Sambandar and his Jain adversaries the superiority of the Hindu faith was established by the Saint getting a palm leaf on which the principal tenets of the Hindus were written, to float against the current This writing among other things contained a prayer for the well-being of the cows

This treatment accorded to the cow also seems to be quite rational in view of the fact that it alone gives milk to beings other than its own calf Hence it is that our scriptures enjoin on us the protection of the cow as an important *dharma* Though anyone can do this *dharma* the *Gītā* prescribes it particularly for the *Vaiśyas* Among the *vaiśya-dharmas* it is given as much prominence as agriculture and trade The *śloka* of the *Gītā* referred to is given below —

कृषिगोरक्षवान् नित्यं वैश्यं कर्म स्वभावजम् ।

As a negative act which will lead to the elimination of sin we should try to conquer desire and anger One who attains perfect control over the senses becomes a *Samnyasi*. It is hard enough to conquer *kāma* It is harder still to control our next enemy, *krodha* The sage *Durvāsas*, like so many other sages, could get over *desire*, but *anger* made his heart its proud fortress! The *Samnyasi*—the *Muni* of the *Gītā*—conquers both these evils To him the world is but a dream and Godhead, which he realises, is the only ultimate reality This is the teaching of the *śloka* of the *Gītā* given below —

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुने: ॥

—*Gītā*, II, 69

CHAPTER XXXII

ŚIVANĀMA AND ŚIVA WORSHIP

People interested in the propagation of other faiths frequently ask us whether we have in our religion any simple remedy for absolving ourselves from our sin They expect a reply in the negative. But we can give a ready answer to this and tell them that we do have a remedy such as they have in view The meditation of the holy name of Lord Śiva is credited with the power of releasing us from the effects of sin Unlike several other acts this is an universal remedy and can be done by one and all of the followers of our faith

The greatness of *Śivanāma* is testified to in several places in the *Śruti* The *Śrī Rudra*, which is the most important of the *mantras* in the Yajur vedic *mantras* deals with *Śivasvarūpa* after disposing of *Śankarasvarūpa* It says —

नमः शङ्कराय च मयस्कराय च नमः शिवाय च शिवतराय च ।

—*Śrī Rudra*

The word *Śiva* is defined as follows in Sanskrit literature Says *Amarakośa* —

श्वःश्रेयसं शिवं भद्रं कल्याणं मङ्गलं शुभम् ।

Thus *Śiva* means that which is eternally happy—*Paramamangala*

Dakṣa, the father of Śiva's spouse, *Dākṣāyanī*, became a hater of *Śiva* and, his daughter, enraged at this, did

not want any more to be called his offspring She therefore preferred to offer her body to fire and to be born again as *Pārvatī* to wed *Śiva* At the time of immolating herself she addressed her father as follows —

यद्व्यक्षर नाम गिरेरितं नृणां
सकृत् प्रसङ्गादघमाशु हन्ति तत् ।
पवित्रकीर्तिं तमलङ्घ्यशासनं
भवानहो द्वेष्टि शिव शिवेतर ॥

In this she expounds to her father the greatness of Lord *Śiva* This statement has a special significance in that it has been expressed at the sublime moment of the self-immolation of a *satī* or dutiful wife Besides it is a *stotra* of *Śiva* occurring in the middle of a *Purāṇa* devoted to *Viṣṇu*

As stated in the following even a *caṇḍāla* or untouchable can meditate on *Śivanāma* —

अपि वा यश्चाण्डालः शिव इति वाच विमृजेत्तेन सह सवसेत् ।

The highest *mantra* for a Hindu, the end of all his philosophy, is the *Oṃkāra* or *Praṇavaśabda* All the *Vedas* teach the eminence of this *mantra* —

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति ।

The *Māṇḍūkya* which is an Upanisad devoted wholly to the exposition of this highest among the *mantras* describes it as connoting —

शान्तम्, शिवम्, अद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते ।
identifying it with *Śivanāma*

Some of the other scriptures which mention the greatness of *Śivanāma* are —

क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः ।

—*Pātañjala Yoga Sūtra*

शब्दादेव प्रमितः ।

—*Brahma Sūtra*

Thus both the *Karmakānda* of the *Vedas*—(*Śrī Rudra*)—and its *Jñānakānda*—(*Māndukyopanisad*)—as well as some of our other scriptures (the *Sūtras* referred to above) establish the sacredness of the name of *Śiva*

The word (शिव) pronounced with the long consonant substituted for the short in its second letter means *Śakti*, who is also described as *Sarvamangalasvarūpinī* Indeed *Śiva* and *Śakti* are considered but two aspects of one and the same Entity The following quotations from the Vedic texts thus describe Lord *Śiva* both as an embodiment of *mangala* or peace and happiness, and as a Being clad in the terrible garment of bones. These texts are —

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोरापापकाशिनी ।
तया नस्तनुवा शतमया गिरिशन्ताभिचाकशीहि ।

—*Śrī Rudra*

तस्यैते तनुवौ घोरान्या शिवान्या ।

—*Taittirīya Samhitā*

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनू शिवा विश्वा ह भेषजी ।
शिवा रुद्रस्य भेषजी तया नो मृड जीवसे ।

—*Śrī Rudra*

Lord *Śiva* is said to manifest himself in both the *Gāyatrī mantra*, *Agni* and in the Sun The texts given below support this view —

को ब्राह्मणैरुपास्यः? गायत्र्यर्काग्निगोचरः शम्भुः ।

—*Praśnottararatnamālikā*

सौरमण्डलमध्यस्थं साम्बं संसारभेषजम् ।
नीलग्रीवं विरूपाक्षं नमामि शिवमव्ययम् ॥
यो रुद्रो अग्नौ ।

—*Srī Rudra*

It is hence enjoined on us that the Lord *Siva* should be contemplated upon when we utter the *Gāyatrī* prayer and while we worship *Agni* or the Sun God

As a further evidence in support of the greatness of *Sivanāma* we may mention the story of the Tamil Saint Sambandar to which we have already referred in these chapters more than once The palm leaf on which he is supposed to have written the essential teachings of our religion contains the prayer that the entire land should be filled with the name of Lord *Siva*

The evening part of the day is specially mentioned as the one during which the name of *Siva* should be meditated upon The evening of the day is known as the *pradosa-kāla*, as defined in the following line of the *Nighantu*

प्रदोषो रजनीमुखम् ।

If a fortnight or the Hindu *paksa* be considered a day, the thirteenth day of that period would correspond to the *Sāyankāla* period of an ordinary day Hence the particular *prodosa* period which happens also to be the thirteenth *tithi* after a fullmoon or a new moon day is known as the *Manāpradosa* During this period the *Devas* or the deities of heaven are supposed to visit *Siva* temples for the worship of the Lord. Hence if we also visit these temples on such occasions we could worship these deities in addition to the Lord

The *śloka* quoted below brings out the sanctity of the name of *Siva*

विद्यासु श्रुतिरुत्कृष्टा रुद्रैकादशिनी श्रुतौ ।
तत्र पञ्चाक्षरी तस्यां शिव इत्यक्षरद्वयम् ॥

The *Yajur Veda* is considered to be the chief of all the *Vedas* The fourth *kāṇḍa* of it is at once the most central and the most important of all its parts The fourth *praśna* of this *kāṇḍa*, in turn, is the most important of all its sub-divisions, and is the *Śrī Rudra* In this *mantra* collection the *Pañcākṣara* (ॐ नमः शिवाय) is the one most centrally placed The two central letters in these five letters form the name of the Lord शिव Hence *Śivanāma* can be considered as the very soul of all *mantras*

Yet another statement of the greatness of *Śivanāma* may be found in the following verse composed by the famous South Indian philosopher, Appaya Dīkṣitar, in one of his works —

यज्जीवरत्नमखिलागमलालनीयं
ये च त्रिनेत्रमृडशंकरनामधेये ।
एतैरपि स्फुटमनन्यसमाश्रय ते
विख्याप्यते सकलजीवसुखप्रदत्वम् ॥

—*Brahmatarkastava*

As external symbols of this worship and meditation of *Śiva* the following have been prescribed —

(i) the smearing of the holy ash—*Vibhūti*—on the body

(ii) the wearing of the *Rudrākṣamālā*

(iii) the worship of the *Śivaliṅga* or the *Śiva* symbol with leaves of the *Bilva* tree

(iv) the uttering of and meditation on the two letters शिव.

(v) for those who have had proper initiation for the same, contemplation on the *Pañcākṣara* or the five letters. (ओं नमः शिवाय).

Every one of these five deeds is credited with the power of pleasing Lord *Siva* *Vibhūti* or the sacred ash is worn by the Lord Himself, the *Rudrākṣamālā* contains beads which are supposed to be symbolic of the third eye in the forehead of Lord *Siva* *Bilvadala* is considered to be one of the five places of residence of *Srī* or the Goddess of Wealth—*Lakṣmī*

Let us now proceed to the *āgama* of *Sivārādhana* or the details of temples intended for the worship of Lord *Siva* A consideration of these should necessarily be preceded by a general study of the very question of symbolic worship

There is no need at this stage for much arguing to prove that even as every known object which can be comprehended by the senses has a maker, the composite creation known as the universe is the result of the creation of a Supreme Being As to where exactly this Maker of all makers resides is a yet beyond human knowledge The *Vedas* in more than one place say that our Creator has a cave for his abode Here are a few of these texts —

ऋत पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके
गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्धे ।

—*Kathavallī*

यो वेद निहितं गुहायाम् ।

—*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*

That He is only one and not a multiple is fairly clear from our observations Any symbol or manifestation which points to an inference is known in the sanskrit language as *Linga* When we hear a peal of thunder we

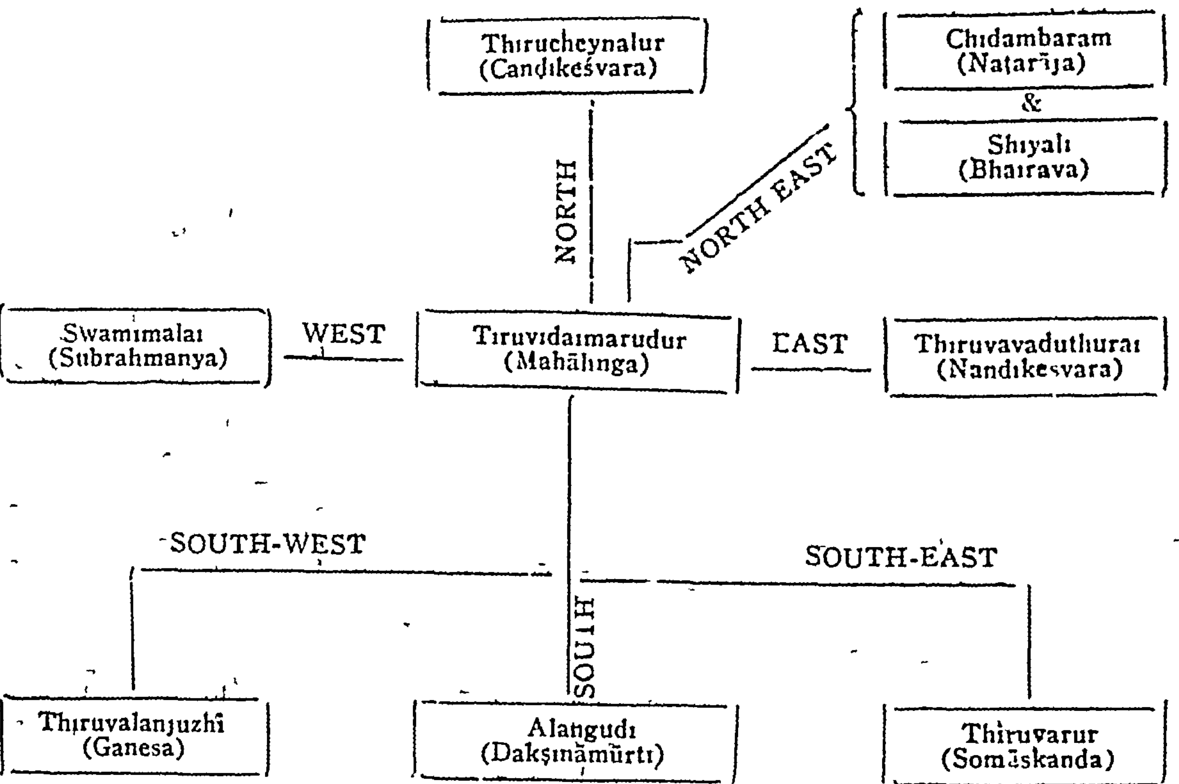
conclude from it that there is a group of clouds in the sky which has produced it The noise known as thunder is a *linga* which indicates the presence of the clouds Likewise smoke is the *linga* of an unseen fire This universe of myriad created objects may be considered as a *linga* of the Almighty Our *Śāstras* have prescribed the *Śivalinga* of the temples of *Śiva* as one such *linga* or symbol the sight or *Darśan* of which is expected to make us think of the Lord

A *Śivalinga* consists of three parts, the lowest of which is the *Brahma Pītha*, the middle one, the *Visnu Pītha* and the topmost one, the *Śiva Pītha*. The *āgama Śāstras* lay down the details regarding the plan of a temple of *Śiva* In the innermost sanctum sanctorum—the *Garbha grha*—the *Mahālinga* or the presiding deity of the temple should be placed The remaining deities should be located as shown below —

(i)	to the north	of the *Garbhagrha*		*Candikeśvara*
(ii)	„ south	„	„	*Daksināmūrti*,
(iii)	„ east	„	„	*Nandikeśvara*.
(iv)	„ west	„	„	*Subrahmanya*
(v)	„ north-east	„	„	*Natarāja and Bhairava*.
(vi)	„ south-west	„	,	*Ganeśa*
(vii)	„ south-east	„	„	*Somāskanda*

Though the *Śivalinga* occupying the central position of the shrine is known generally as the *Mahālinga* of the temple, it is further distinguished by a particular name which is described as the name of the presiding deity of the place Thus the God of the Mylapore temple is known as *Kapāleśvara*, of Conjeevaram, *Ekāmareśvara*, and so on. There is one temple in South India, in the part known as *Coladeśa*, where the presiding deity is known as *Mahālinga*

or the Great *Linga*. This is the temple at Tiruvidaimarudūr in Tanjore district. This temple is so located that, treating it as the *garbhagṛha* of the whole of the Tamil country, there are found in its neighbourhood entire temples the presiding deities of which are the minor Gods enumerated above, occupying positions which correspond exactly to the directions in the *Āgamas* regarding the location of these deities in an individual *Śiva* temple. The plan given below illustrates this.



Note.—The names of places given in this plan have not been marked in accordance with the scheme of transliteration adopted in this book

Hence the shrine of Lord *Mahālinga* at Tiruvidaimarudur, known in Sanskrit as *Madhyārjuna*, is considered as the great Śiva temple of the whole of the Tamil Deśa

Lord Śiva is said to have manifested Himself to the world in sixty different aspects or *mūrtisvarūpas* Each of these has been given a name A few of these are *Vrsabhārūdha, Ardhanārīśvara, Harihara, Natarāja, Bhairava, Daksināmūrti, Somaśekharamūrti, Bhiksātana, Ūrdhvanatana, Jalandharāsurasamhāra, Kālasamhāra,* and so on. One such *mūrtisvarūpa* is known as *Lingodbhava*, and, being of especial significance to us, is depicted in every Śiva temple

The position occupied by the image of *Lingodbhavamūrti* is to the west of the *Garbhagrha* and exactly behind the *Mahālinga* of the temple It is supposed to be the representation of Lord Śiva in his Omnipresent form as an infinite *Jyotis-svarūpa* the crest and the bottom of which, according to the *Purānas*, Brahmā and Visnu, respectively, failed to locate This effulgent form whose beginning is lost in the *Pātāla* and whose end is equally lost in the heavens is meditated upon by every devotee of Śiva in the preliminary *Stotra* reproduced below —

आपातालनभःस्थलान्तभुवनब्रह्माण्डमाविःस्फुर-
ज्ज्योतिः स्फाटिकलिङ्गमौलिविलसत्पूर्णेन्दुवान्तामृतैः ।
अस्तोकाप्लुतमेकमीशमनिशं रुद्रानुवाकाञ्जपन्
ध्यायेदीप्सितसिद्धयेऽद्रुतपदं विप्रोऽभिषिञ्चेच्छिवम् ॥

—*Rudrābhisekamantras*

In order to impress on the mind of the worshipper this dimensionless infinitude of Lord Almighty, a form of the symbol of Śiva known as the *Sphatikalinga* is specially prescribed for *ārādhana* This *linga* is made of pure

CHAPTER XXXIII

SAKTI WORSHIP AND ITS FRUITS

What is familiar to readers in Northern India as *Śakti* is variously known in South India as *Ambāl*, *Ambikā*, *Gaurī*, *Candramaulīśvarī*, *Jñānāmbikā*, and so on This is the name given in the Hindu *Purāṇas* to Lord Śiva's spouse The *Śakti* or *Ambāl* cult is the conception of Almighty as the Universal Mother

An excellent description of the essential oneness of *Śiva* and *Śakti* is that contained in the very first *śloka* of Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṃśa*—reproduced below—in which it is stated that *Śakti* and *Śiva* stand to each other in the same relationship as the word and its meaning

वागर्थाविव सपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगत· पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

Śakti is often described as the giver of the power of the tongue Many are the mortals who by worshipping Her, had attained that gift in the past The story of how Kālidāsa, from being an unlettered shepherd, was turned into India's most talented poet through the good graces of Kālī is well known to every Hindu Similarly a dumb man residing at the ancient city of Kāñcī was, through the *upāsana* of *Ambikā*, blessed with the power of speech and became the famous *Mūka* These persons, naturally enough, have celebrated these incidents in verse, Kālidāsa in his *Śyāmalādandaka*, and *Mūka* in his *Mūka-Pañca-Śatī*,

The sages and other devotees who have sung devotionally in praise of *Ambikā* are a legion and as the chief among them we may mention the saint Durvāsa and the great Hindu reformer, Sankara Durvāsa's songs on the *Jaganmātā*, numbering 200, are collectively known as the *Āryādviśatī* Sankara's principal *stotra* of *Sakti* is his immortal *Saundaryalaharī*

The meditation of *Ambāl* in the form of *Gaurīpūjā* is especially prescribed for the young Hindu bride who is on the threshold of matrimony, because *Sakti* is considered as the *Satī* par excellence The story of the sacrifice of Daksa brings out *Ambikā's* greatness as a devoted wife Imagine for a moment what kind of a person it was her lot to have as her husband Śiva, at his best, could be anything but attractive to a woman The cremation ground is his favourite abode Snakes are his ornaments, and the tiger skin, his garment! Is anything required to make a person more terrible-looking? Here are a few descriptions of this awful Being which the *Vedas* contain —

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूरघोरापापकाशिनी ।

—*Srī Rudra*

अघोरेभ्योऽथ घोरेभ्यो घोरघोरतरेभ्यः ।

—*Rudrābhisekamantras*

For the sake of this husband *Ambikā* was prepared to immolate herself on the fire, because she could not brook to live after having listened to a volley of abuse of her husband from a third person, though that third person was her own father! Can a better example of a dutiful wife be found to be pointed to as the model for the would-be *Grhini*.

The devotees of *Sakti*, in their praise of Her, have even said that, without Her, Śiva Himself cannot exist. Says the *Veda* :—

या ते रुद्र शिवा तनूः शिवा विश्वा ह भेषजी ।
शिवा रुद्रस्य भेषजी तया नो मृड जीवसे ॥

—*Srī Rudra*

—Which means that Śiva was saved from the deadly poison which He swallowed at the time of the great churning of the seas, only by the presence of *Śakti* by his side. The necessity for *Śakti's* existence for the various activities of Lord Śiva is emphasised by Śankara in the first sloka of his *Saundaryalaharī*, given below —

शिवः शक्त्या युक्तो यदि भवति शक्तः प्रभवितु
न चेदेवं देवो न खलु कुशलः स्पन्दितुमपि ।
अतस्त्वामाराध्यां हरिहरविरिञ्चादिभिरपि
प्रणन्तु स्तोतु वा कथमकृतपुण्यः प्रभवति ॥

The realisation of the ultimate knowledge of God—the end of all religious teaching—is also said to result from the *Upāsanā* or worship of *Ambikā* The Upanisadic support for this view is furnished by the story of the *Kenopanisad* known as the *Yaksapraśna* This story runs as follows —

In a fight with their eternal enemies, the *Asuras*, the *Devas* were victorious thanks to the help of the Almighty, but in their flush of victory they forgot that it was divine help which made them win, and attributed it to their own prowess The Lord, wanting to teach them a lesson, appeared before them as a huge form the beginning and end of which were not visible This form which defied dimensions is described as the *Yaksa* in the story The *devas* desired to establish the identity of this form and sent *Agni* for the purpose On being asked by the *Yaksa* who he was, *Agni* said that he was the god of fire and was known variously as *Agni* and *Jātavedas* The *Yaksa* asked *Agni* what the latter could do, on which the reply came that

he could reduce everything to ashes The *Yaksa* placed a piece of straw before *Agni* and asked him to burn it Try however much he might it was found impossible for *Agni* to inflame that piece of straw Next came *Vāyu*, the god of wind, and, being challenged by the *Yaksa* to blow away that little piece of straw, could not make it move an inch from its place Last of all came the chief of the *Devatās*, *Indra* himself But when he reached the spot he found that the *Yaksa* had disappeared While Indra was standing there confused and ashamed at their discomfiture, *Haimavati*, the Spouse of the *Paramātmā*, appeared before him and revealed to him the real identity of the *Yaksa*

Sakti, in the role in which she has appeared in this episode, is considered to be the great teacher of *Jñāna* or the sublime truth and is known as *Jñānāmbikā* Even as she taught the great truth to the *Devas*, she is believed to shed wisdom and knowledge on her devotees

CHAPTER XXXIV

ONENESS OF ŚIVA AND VIṢṆU

In addition to performing the various rites and ritua prescribed in the *Vedas*, most Hindus indulge in the worsh or *ārādhana* of a personal God Their worship is know as *Upāsanā* and the worshippers themselves are call *Upāsakas* When we analyse the worship they perfor these *Upāsakas* are seen to fall under two categories *viz.*, *Śaivaites* and *Vaiṣṇavaites* In other words these two groups are the devotees of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu* The temples in the land are also similarly divided into *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu* temples In course of time these two groups have separated from each other so greatly that their devotion to their personal deity, undoubtedly pure in itself, has developed in some extreme cases into a type of bigotry which is marked by the hatred of personal gods other than their own. Naturally enough such a situation gives room for controversies regarding the superiority of the one or the other of these personal gods Thus the *Vīraśaivas* cannot brook the very sight of *Viṣṇu* temples, and the *Vīravaiṣṇavaites* will not enter the shrines of *Śiva* This spirit of hatred extends even to the *purāṇas* which are devoted to these two personal Gods The *Vaiṣṇavaites* do not read or listen to the *Śiva Purāṇas* and the *Śaivaites*, likewise, ignore the *Purāṇas* which celebrate the deeds of *Viṣṇu*

An impartial study of the scriptures, however, reveals that *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu* are but one and the same entity.

These are the names given to the different aspects of the all-pervading *Paramātmā*

The present day cults of sectarian worship, if we may so call it, are of comparatively recent origin The *Śaiva Siddhānta* of *Śrīkanthācārya* is only 500 years old The *Vaiṣṇavaite* cults of *Rāmānuja* and *Madhva* are but 700 and 600 years old, respectively About 800 years ago, *i e*, before all these separatist cults of worship came into vogue, no such difference was observed in matters of *Upāsanā* or private and public worship

Śankara, who preceded all the religious preceptors mentioned above, has given his opinion on the oneness of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu* in very clear terms Says he in his *Praśnottararatnamālikā* that *Śankara* (meaning *Śiva*) and *Nārāyana* are one and the same All-pervading Soul.

कश्च भगवान् महेशः शङ्करनारायणात्मैकः ॥

—*Śloka 65, line 2*

To represent this idea there is even a temple in South India where the idol of the presiding deity has one half of it depicted as *Śiva* and the other half, as *Viṣṇu* This is the temple at *Śankaranāyanārkoil* in Tinnevelly District

In the whole of the ten principal *Upaniṣads* the all-pervading *Paramātmā* is known only by one name, which is *Brahmam* The names *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu* occur but once in the whole of these *Jñānakānda* texts In the *Kathopaniṣad* the *śabda* of *Viṣṇu* occurs in the following line —

विष्णोः परम पदम् ।

In the *Māndūkyopaniṣad*, we come across *Śivaśabda* which occurs in the text —

शिवम् अद्वैतम् ।

Even these go to prove only the essential oneness of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*

The great poet *Kālidāsa* also gives expression to the same view in the following quotation from his works —

एकैव मूर्तिर्बिभिदे त्रिधा सा सामान्यमेषां प्रथमावरत्वम् ।

Similar other texts are found in plenty in both Sanskrit and Tamil literature all of which seek to establish this truth about the oneness of *Śiva* and *Viṣṇu*

Our *Śāstras* offer an explanation for the existence of the separate conceptions of *Śiva*, *Viṣṇu* and *Brahmā* They say that the Lord *Parameśvara* appeared as the *Trimūrti-svarūpas*, *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Rudra* for purposes of performing the three functions of *Sṛṣṭi* or creation, *Sthiti* or preservation, and *Saṃhāra* or destruction In each of these *mūrti svarūpas* He has assumed each of the three fundamental *guṇas* or mental qualities, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* Thus as the creator, *Brahmā*, the *Rājasic* quality of mind predominates in Him , as the preserver, *Viṣṇu*, He is of the *Sāttvik* frame of mind; and in his role as *Śiva*, the destroyer, He displays the *Tāmasic* quality It is like our appearing in different forms of external dress and displaying different kinds of temperaments at different stages of our lives The garment in which we appear in our offices is not the same as that in which we appear at home Again when we play the role of hosts in the company of a group of guests or *Atithis*, we exhibit an entirely different attitude of mind from that which we show when we, as a teacher, chastise a boy who plays the truant

The three *mūrti svarūpas* of *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Rudra* have also been correlated to the three *avasthās* or states of consciousness which repeat themselves in our lives These states of consciousness are the *Jāgrat*, the *Svapna* and the

Suṣupti avasthās, or the waking, the dream and the dreamless or the deep-sleep state of mind It is said that during the waking state the *Sāttvik* quality of mind predominates, that during the dream state the *Rājasik* is the characteristic quality, and that in the deep-sleep state the mind is *Tāmasik* in nature Hence *Śiva*, *Viṣṇu* and *Brahmā* are the *Mūrtis* of the *Suṣupti*, *Jāgrat* and *Svapna* states of consciousness, respectively. The *Turīya* or the fourth state of the Vedāntin which is identified with Godhead itself, is beyond all these three states of consciousness of the human mind The *Suṣupti avasthā*, being the one immediately next to it, the *Upāsanā* of *Śiva* is said to lead to the ultimate attainment of the *Turīya* state In other words, of all worships that of Lord *Śiva* is credited with the power of making the *Upāsaka* or devotee realise God

To sum up, it is the all-pervading *Paramātmā* who divides Himself into the three entities, *Śiva*, *Viṣṇu* and *Brahmā* This He does in order to carry on the work of creating, preserving and destroying this universe To each of these *mūrtisvarūpas* he assigns one of these three functions Hence, though the forms of these three *mūrtisvarūpas* are different, they are essentially one and the same They are but the same Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient Being in different apparel In these three *avasthās*, the *Paramātmā* assumes each of the three *guṇas*, *Sattvam*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* Likewise, in these *mūrtisvarūpas*, He identifies Himself with each of the three states of mental consciousness, *Jāgrat*, *Svapna* and *Suṣupti*

CHAPTER XXXV

THE PURUSA SŪKTA

It is a matter of common observation that this Universe that we see around us is full of countless objects of creation They range from the tadpole to the whale, from the worm to the rhinoceros and abound in celestial beings such as stars, planets, meteors, comets and the like Even within one and the same group such as, for instance, the birds or the beasts, there are to be found innumerable types and varieties Then again there are the various time units and measures such as the seconds, the minutes, the hours, the day and the night, the week, the fortnight, the month, the *Rtus* or seasons, the *Ayanas* or six-monthly periods, the year and so on Now the thought naturally arises, who made these created things and beings? When were they made and for what object? How long are they going to last? When the end comes what is to happen to them? Have these one or many creators?

The above represent one type of doubts There are also other kinds of doubts which arise in our minds For instance, we find that some created beings are happy and others are stricken with grief Some are friendly towards their kin, while others hate and quarrel with each other. Why should this be so? To these and to several other doubts of a like nature our scriptures contain answers and explanations The *Purusasūkta* is a collection of *mantras* which contains an answer to some of these doubts It deals with the subject of creation

Our *Sāstras* describe the Maker of all this Universe as a *Mahāpurusa* or the Great Being *Bodhāyana*, prefaces his work on private and public (or 'household' and 'temple') worship with the following text :—

अथातो महापुरुषस्य पूज्यां व्याख्यास्यामः ।

—*Bodhāyanasūtras*

which means "let us now proceed to the exposition of the details of the worship of the *Mahāpurusa*" The term *Purusasūkta* means that which is well said of the *Purusa* The term *Mahāpurusa* means the great *Purusa* and refers to the All-powerful *Paramātmā* The *Purusasūkta* is that part of the *Vedas* which proclaims their knowledge of the *Paramātmā* in His capacity as the creator of this Universe It contains sixteen *mantras* and can be used in the worship of any of the personal Gods such as *Siva, Visnu, Subrahmanya* and *Vināyaka*, whose *ārādhana* was referred to as one of the daily acts prescribed for a true Sanātani

While on the subject of creation it would be interesting to note a parallel between our view of it and that contained in the scriptures of the Christian Faith In the Vedic text extracted below it is said that there are two birds sitting on a tree of which one eats the fruit of the tree and the other does not —

द्वा सुपर्णा सुयुजा सखाया
समानं वृक्ष परिषस्वजाते ।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्ति
अनश्नन्न्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥

—*Mundakopanisad*

With the aid of this parable the *Sruti* seeks to establish the relative natures of the *Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā, viz*, that the one is subjected to the enjoyment of

the fruits of *karma* and that the other is free from it Is it not very suggestive that the biblical story of Adam and Eve and of the fall of the first man through the eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree in the garden of Eden is but a corrupt and half-understood version of the foregoing story of the *Upanisads*?

Before concluding we may note that, even as our Maker does, we, His creatures, also indulge, in our own little way, in the three acts of creation, preservation and destruction We create worlds and visions during the dream-state, preserve them in our memory during the waking hours and destroy them in sleep The fourth state, known as the *Turīya*, is the one beyond all these *avasthās* and, when one attains this, one enters into Eternal Bliss

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE JĪVAN MUKTI STATE

The phenomena of birth and death are well known to every one of us The former is the association of the soul —the *Jīvātmā*—with a body The latter is its liberation from it Births and deaths form links in an ever-revolving chain and the certainty with which the one follows the other is most beautifully put by the Lord in His immortal teaching to Arjuna —

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।

—*Bhagavad-Gītā*, II-27

We saw in a former chapter that every living being on earth is engaged from the very moment of its birth in an eternal quest for something which would appease its hunger. We also said that hunger is the greatest of all diseases human flesh is heir to, with this difference that the other diseases are cured by the respective medicines, while the appeasement of this disease by food serves only to make it recur again At first sight it seems that the struggles and miseries of this life would be put an end to when this body dies and this view gets apparent support by men resorting to suicide as a remedy from the ills of this life The universal condemnation of this act as a heinous crime at once eliminates it as a permanent cure for the disease of hunger, which is only another way of saying, release from the chain of birth and death Besides, the text from the Gītā quoted above makes it clear that death, by its incidence,

far rather makes the coming of another life a certainty than it renders it the last of its kind The search for a permanent cure for this disease of hunger must therefore be made elsewhere

The permanent release of a soul from the wheel of life and death is variously described in our scriptures It is often referred to as the conquest of death The attainment of a state of being in which death could be said to have been conquered in this life itself, is described as the attainment of the *Jīvan Mukti* state Many are the great men who are said to have achieved this conquest over death in the past, one of the most recent of these in South India being the saint of Nirur, *Sadāśivabrahmendra* The text in the *śruti* which indicates the possibility of the attainment of this state occurs in the *Purusasūkta* and runs as follows —

तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति । नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥

This means that whoever realises Godhead or *Atmasvarūpa* becomes a *Jīvan Mukta* and conquers death in this very life There is no other means to achieve this end Sankara is only refering to this when he says —

तदेतत् अशरीरत्व मोक्षाख्यम् ।

—*Sūtra Bhāsya, I-1-4*

which means that *moksa* (*i e* conquest over death) lies in the complete ignoring of the body in this life itself

Life to human beings is but a bundle of attachments In the first place we love ourselves and exhibit this love in expressions such as 'my', 'mine', and the like Then again we surround ourselves with children, relations and friends, in whose joy or sorrow we delight or grieve Bodily pains and ailments we consider as affecting the soul as when we say 'we are sick' All this comes out of the *Avidyā* or ignorance

of the fundamental fact that the body is entirely different from the soul Once this difference is realised, we may be said to have attained real knowledge. The *śruti* says that one should courageously separate the soul from the body even as we draw out the ears of corn from the sheaf —

तं स्वाच्छरीरात् प्रवृहेत् । मुञ्जादिवेषीकां धैर्येण । तं विद्या-च्छुक्रममृतम् ।

—*Kathopanisad*

The same could be put in another way When we see an object there is an object which sees and one which is seen Neither of these is the *ātmā* and he who identifies the soul with either the seer or the object seen is an ignorant man Thus the soul may be described as that which is not seen by one who says he has seen and as that which is seen by one who says he has not seen This is the definition given in the *śruti* text extracted below —

अविज्ञातं विजानताम्, विज्ञातमविजानताम् ।

—*Kenopanisad*

One who becomes bodyless, as it were, in this life itself is a *Jīvan Mukta* Pleasures and pain affect him not, as attests the following quotation from the *śruti* —

अशरीरं वा व सन्त न प्रियाप्रिये स्पृशतः ।

—*Bṛhadāranyakopanisad*

The same truth is also conveyed in the following *śloka* which occurs in the commentary of *Sankara* on the *Brahmā Sūtras* —

गौणमिथ्यात्मनोऽसत्त्वे पुत्रदेहादिबाधनात् ।
सद्ब्रह्मात्माहमित्येव बोधे कार्यं कथ भवेत् ॥

—*Sūtra Bhāsya-I-1-4*

In this verse reference is made to the division of the soul into three parts, *viz*, the *Gauṇātmā*, the *Mithyātmā*, and the *Mukhyātmā*, the first two of which are concerned with the identification of the soul with the body This *śloka* says that one who separates the first two and realises the third becomes a *Jīvan Mukta* and conquers death in this very life

CHAPTER XXXVII
DEVĀNĀM-PRIYAH
[देवानां प्रियः]

[*Note* —This chapter has not got as direct a bearing on the religious teachings and beliefs of the Hindus as the previous ones, but is included with a view to showing the immense possibilities of our religious works as material for historical research —*Translator*]

Kalhana's Rājataranginī is a literary work which contains an account of the various dynasties of kings who ruled over *Kāsmīr* with copious references to the contemporary rulers of the other parts of the country Likewise, that part of our scriptures which we call the *Purānas*, notably the *Visnu* the *Matsya*, the *Vāyu*, and the *Bhāgavata Purānas*, is replete with chronological references to the dynasties of kings who held sway over the land during the respective periods. To what extent these works can be and have actually been made use of in determining the history of ancient India will form the subject matter of this chapter, with particular reference to a detail which occurs in connection with the fixing of the date of Aśoka's reign

Western scholars who have pioneered the work of conducting researches into the history of ancient India have started with the reign of Lord Buddha whose birth they have put down at 477 B C Their next detailed account is that of the reign of the Mauryan King, Candragupta. The basis for their conclusion about Candragupta's age is the private diary of a certain *Yavana* traveller who is said to have visited this land during the time of this king.

These very scholars who take the accounts of foreign travellers with absolute trust decry our *Purāṇas* and denounce them as unreliable for purposes of historical research If anything said in the *Purāṇas* or in ancient works such as *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅginī* goes counter to some of their conclusions, they suggest the rejection of what is stated in the former. It may therefore be of interest to see how far this view about the doubtful veracity of our scriptural texts as sources of historical information is correct

A detail connected with the chronological history of the reign of Aśoka may be taken for purposes of our examination Asoka, as every one knows, is one of the well-known kings of ancient India and has been described as the greatest among the royal supporters of the Buddhistic faith Curiously enough ancient literary works in Sanskrit make no mention of him, though one explanation for it is that these works are from Hindu hands On the other hand, the Lord Buddha Himself figures in these works and has, indeed, been accepted as one of the Hindu *avatārs* or incarnations of God The ancient play *Mudrārākṣasa* mentions Aśoka's grandfather, Candragupta Maurya, and refers to the Nava Nandanas as his contemporaries

The principal source of information to Western scholars about Aśoka is the inscription on the various pillars and rocks which are said to have been placed by him in various parts of the country as part of his propaganda to spread the gospel of Lord Buddha These inscriptions are in the Pāli language, which is a corrupt form of *māgadhī* or *magadhaprākṛta*, one of the spoken forms of Sanskrit

It is curious that these written edicts, forming as they do the most important material available for Aśokan

research, do not mention the king by name, but describe him by the term, *Devānām-priya* (देवानां प्रिय), the correct interpretation of which has been a matter of controversy. The exact Pāli term which occurs in the inscriptions reads as *Devānāmpiyassa* and is but the modification of the Sanskrit expression *Devānām-priyasya* Western scholars who have taken this to refer to Aśoka say that this term means 'beloved of the Gods' On the other hand in the grammatical work, *Pāninīya*, this expression is said to mean an 'idiot' or a 'perverse and obstinate person' Some of the Western researchers who have been puzzled by this apparent inconsistency have tried to get out of the difficulty by suggesting that the term first meant well, but that a bad meaning was given to it later on by Hindu writers to spite Aśoka for his having been the supporter of a hostile faith!

This theory of the Western scholars is obviously absurd as it leads to chronological impossibilities How can *Pānini* coin a bad expression with a view to applying it to Aśoka who came several hundreds of years after him? An explanation for the discrepancy must hence be sought elsewhere

Sankara has used this term in one of his works It occurs in the following line extracted from his *Brahma-sūtrabhāsya* —

इदं तावद्देवानांप्रियः प्रष्टव्यः ।

While discoursing on the *Paramātmā* and the *Jīvātmā* the *Sūtrakāra* says that the two are different in nature On hearing this somebody questions "How can the two be different, while, from the Advaitic point of view, these are the same?" In replying to this the great commentator first describes the questioner as 'an idiot' or 'ignorant person' by calling him *devānāmpriyah* From this we may infer

hat the 'ignorance' implied by the grammarian, *Pāriṇi*, in he expression, *devānāṃpriyaḥ*, is the ignorance of the essential oneness of the *Paramātmā* and the *Jīvātmā* as aught by the monists.

This meaning seems to fit in well with the context because the Buddhists, being opposed to the Vedas and to the conception of monism may be treated as 'ignorant' persons from the view point of Hindu authors But this does not completely solve the difficulty as it is not clear why such an 'ignorant' person should also be described elsewhere as being 'dear to the Gods'

In the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* occurs a line which runs as follows:—

तस्मात् एषां तन्न प्रियं यदेतन्मनुष्या विद्यु ।

and means that the Gods—the '*Devas*'—do not like human beings attaining to the knowledge of the Supreme Soul. This is also repeated elsewhere in the following sentence which occurs in the *śruti* :—

एवं स देवानाम् ।

Naturally therefore the deities love a person who has not realised *Brahman*

Let us now proceed to examine why the Gods should delight to see man immersed in ignorance The complete text from which the second of the above quotations is taken is as follows:—

अथ योऽन्यां देवतामुपास्तेऽन्योऽसावन्योऽहमस्मीति ।
न स वेद यथा पशु ; एवं स देवानाम् ।

—*Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*

In this passage we are described as cattle and the Lord *Parameśvara* as the cattle-owner. A parallel quotation

from the *śruti* in which the Lord is described as *Paśupati* is the one given below —

वयं तु पशवोऽस्माक त्वमेव पतिरीश्वरः ।

The idea conveyed in these and in similar other texts is that man is not a free animal, but is bound by the cords of *karma* and *māyā* The three entities used in this simile, *viz.*, the *paśu*, the *pati*, and the *pāśa* or the 'binding cord,' stand, respectively, for the *Jīvātmā*, the *Paramātmā*, and *Māyā* or illusion Even as cattle, man is an ignorant being He ceases to be a *paśu* the moment he considers himself to be the same as the God whose *upāsaka* or worshipper he is So long as he treats himself as a being different from his personal God he continues to be a cattle or *paśu* Hence says the *śruti* —

देवताम् अन्याम् उपास्ते ।

When one attains to the knowledge of the essential oneness of the *Paramātmā* and the *Jīvātmā*, one becomes a *Jñānī* and ceases to perform his vedic *karmas* or rituals These rites are performed to please the *devatās* and consist in the offering of the various *Havirbhāgas* to them Once a person becomes a knower of Godhead, these sacrificial offerings are stopped Hence it is that the Gods or the *Devatās* do not very much like a person attaining divine knowledge A person therefore becomes 'beloved of the Gods' or a *Devānāmpriya* by remaining a doer of the vedic *karmas.* Such a person is, however, considered 'ignorant' from the standpoint of the *Vedāntin* The expression *Devānāmpriya* thus means 'beloved of the Gods' when looked at from one point of view and an 'ignorant person' from another angle of vision The discrepancy which has puzzled the Western scholars no longer exists when one analyses the texts in the degree of detail in which they should be

examined, such as has been done above When our researches are conducted with an open mind and so thoroughly as the one attempted in this chapter, the *Purāṇas* and other ancient Sanskrit works will not fail to afford us material useful for historical research

CHAPTER XXXVIII
OUR TEMPLES AND THEIR INSCRIPTIONS

In the days of old the *maharsis* or sages of the forests conducted the worship of the Lord in the shade of the jungle trees or by the side of the rivers where their huts or *parnaśālās* were situated In later days the places so rendered sacred by their association with these austere personages were made the sites for temples of *Siva* and *Visnu* for the common good of the people As suggestive of their origin the temples in South India which are the ones constructed in strict accordance with the injunctions of the *Agamaśāstras* have each got a sacred tree associated with it which is known as the *Sthalavrksa* Thus, to mention but a few instances, the following temples have the trees mentioned against them for their *Sthalavrksas* —

(i) the temple at *Tiruvānaikkāval*—the *Jambū* tree

(ii) „ „ *Conjeevaram* (Big)—the *Āmra* or mango tree

(iii) „ „ *Tiruvidaimarudūr*—the *Arjuna* tree or *Terminalia arjuna*

Likewise each temple in South India has a story of its origin attached to it, known as the *Sthalapurāna* It has of late become the fashion to decry such accounts of happenings in the past as pure figments of imagination Such wholesale denunciation of our ancient Purānic literature is indeed a matter for regret, especially when it is remembered that such condemnation is indulged in without a prior impartial and detailed study of the facts of the case

As a sample of these *Sthalapurāṇas* the following may be mentioned. It is said that the present-day temple of Lord *Jambukeśvara* at *Tiruvāṇaikkāval*, a place quite close to the town of Trichinopoly, marks the site of the *āśrama* of a saint by name, *Jambūmaharṣi*, who is stated to have so utterly forgotten himself in the course of his meditation that an ant-hill grew on and around him, and, in course of time, completely covered him. A *Jambū* tree soon sprang up on the spot. Hidden underneath all these was the *linga* or the symbol of *Śiva* which the saint had worshipped. It so happened that this *Śivalinga* had two other devotees of a curious nature, *viz.*, a spider and an elephant. The spider daily wove a web over the ant-hill with the object of guarding its God from the burning effect of Sun's light! Likewise, the elephant daily fetched the water of the sacred river, Cauvery, in its trunk and bathed the *linga* with it! The spider's web was washed away by the water poured by the elephant. This went on for some time, until at last the spider, enraged at the elephant's act of destruction, one day took it into its head to sting its rival worshipper. The elephant, in retaliation, stamped the poor insect under its feet to death, and itself subsequently died as a result of the spider's poison (the *Lūtāviṣa* of *Ayurveda Śāstra*). The spider, the *Sthalapurāṇa* says, was born in the next birth as the *Coḷa* king, Kōccenkatcoḷa, or 'the red-eyed *Coḷa*', so named because of his possessing a pair of reddish eyes! The belief is that the spider's eyes at the time of its death were red with anger and continued to have that tinge even in the next birth. Curiously enough, this king, who was a staunch devotee of *Śiva* and who has renovated as many as seventy temples during his reign, seems to have insisted that the renovated shrines of *Śiva* should be so built that the *garbhagrha*

should be too small to be accessible to an elephant! This too is supposed to be the projection into his present life of the memory of his feud with his rival worshipper in his past life In the temple at *Jambukeśvara* (another name for *Tiruvāṉaikkāval'* we still see the images of a spider and an elephant worshipping a *Śivalinga* underneath a *Jambū* tree This story has been preserved for us not only in the *Sthala-purāṇa* of the place but has also been mentioned in the devotional songs sung about the place by the Tamil saints of the South

An incidental advantage of very great importance which we derive from these ancient temples is the wealth of information which we gather from the inscriptions their walls contain It may truly be said that these temple walls formed the king's registration department Every gift both by the king and by his citizens was recorded in an inscription on the temple wall Other particulars relating to the administration of the village which, they consider, are worthy of being perpetuated, were also similarly recorded These inscriptions, properly interpreted, contain very valuable data capable of throwing much useful light on matters such as chronology. Some of these inscriptions indicate the widespread existence of the principle of democracy in the management of village institutions One such inscription, *viz*, that reported from the walls of the temple at a village known as Uttaramelūr, goes so far as to lay down the very laws and regulations which governed their elections and similar other matters.

It is clear from the foregoing that the institution of temples was a very useful one in the days gone by and occupied a very prominent place in the social economy of the people both from a secular and a mundane point of view

CHAPTER XXXIX

DAKSINĀMŪRTI, THE DIVINE PRECEPTOR, AND THE SMĀRTA GURU PARAMPARĀ

More than any other religion the Hindu faith emphasises the need for *Guru-upadeśa* or the learning of the great truths at the feet of a master Certain sections of it, for instance the *Vaisnavaite* sects, even lay down such an *Upadeśa* from a religious *guru* as a *sine qua non* for the attainment of *moksa* or spiritual liberation For this purpose various religious leaders or *ācāryas* have appeared from time to time and each sect or sub-division has thus a regular succession of *gurus* known as the *guruparamparā* to whose revered memories worshipful prayers are periodically offered

The *Advaitic* sect which forms a large proportion among the Hindus depicts this *guru* conception in the shape of the deity known as *Daksināmūrti* In *Śiva* temples the image of this *mūrti* is placed to the south of the *mahālinga* of the shrine in the quadrangle immediately next to the *garbhagrha* The image is that of a young person surrounded by four old persons, the central figure displaying to the others, on his fingers, what is known as the *Cinmudrā* This sign or expression is a symbol for the advaitic or non-dualistic conception of this universe and consists in the bringing together of the thumb and the forefinger of the right hand This symbol means that the *paramātmā*, as represented by the *tarjanī* or the forefinger, and the *jīvātmā*, as represented by the *angustha* or the thumb, are essentially one and the same. The following

sloka describes this representation of the divine preceptor as *Daksināmūrti* —

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुर्युवा ।
गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु च्छिन्नसंशयाः ॥

The *sloka* says that under the banyan tree a young teacher is seen seated as motionless as in a picture in the midst of disciples much older than himself and that the disciples' spoken doubts are expelled by the silent expositions of the *guru* with the aid of certain symbols which he makes now and then with his hands This conception is remarkable for its contradiction to the facts of life We are accustomed to old teachers and younger pupils, but here the order is reversed Then again the teacher generally does most of the talking and the pupils attentively listen, but in this picture of the ideal *guru* and *Sisyas*, the reverse is the case

Daksināmūrti, the divine *guru*, is supposed to be Lord *Paramesvara* Himself in his aspect as the religious preceptor. The elderly disciples by whom he is surrounded are the four *munis* with Sanaka at their head It is said that, as *Daksināmūrti*, the Lord *Paramasiva* manifests himself as the *Yamī* or the destroyer of the senses, *Indriyas*, about whom the Gītā describes in the verse quoted below —

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥

Chapter II, verse 69

What is light to us is darkness to this *muni* and what is night to us is light to him In other words he is able to see the real truth whereas we are not

Daksināmūrti is only a conception and therefore does not figure in the *guruparamparās* The advaitic succes-

sion of *gurus* starts with the Lord *Nārāyana* Himself as the first preceptor The first fourteen *gurus* in the list are mentioned in the *śloka* extracted below —

नारायणं पद्मभुवं वसिष्ठं
शक्तिं च तत्पुत्रपराशरं च ।
व्यासं शुकं गौडपदं महान्तं
गोविन्दयोगीन्द्रमथास्य शिष्यम् ॥
श्रीशङ्कराचार्यमथास्य पद्म-
पादं च हस्तामलकं च शिष्यम् ।
तं तोटकं वार्तिककारमन्या-
नस्मद्गुरून् सन्ततमानतोऽस्मि ॥

These fourteen teachers who figure first in the succession list are —

(i) Lord *Nārāyana*,
(ii) *Brahmā*,
(iii) *Vasistha*,
(iv) *Sakti*, a son of the sage *Vasistha*,
(v) *Parāśara*,
(vi) *Vedavyāsa*,
(vii) *Śuka*,
(viii) *Gaudapāda*,
(ix) *Govinda Bhagavatpādācārya*,
(x) *Śrī Sankara Bhagavatpādācārya*,
(xi) *Padmapādācārya*,
(xii) *Hastāmalakācārya*,
(xiii) *Totakācārya*, and
(xiv) *Sureśvarācārya*

The first seven in this list form a paternal succession; in other words, any two of these are father and son. The

last seven have no ties of blood binding them but stand to each other in the strict relation of the teacher and the taught The last four are the foremost among the disciples of the tenth *guru* who is the great *Ādi Sankara*

In addition to the above each *advaitin* is expected to meditate on the four *gurus* from the last starting from and including the one alive at the time. These *gurus*, in the reverse order, are known, respectively, as the *guru*, the *paramaguru*, the *parameshguru* and the *parāparaguru*

As already stated at the beginning of this chapter each sect of the Hindus has its own list of *gurus* or givers of religious enlightenment, but the above one of the *smārtas* or *advaitins* is given here as a representative type.

CHAPTER XL

THE LANGUAGE—ITS NEED AND USES

In order to be able to communicate its feelings to its fellow creatures, every created object in this world is endowed with the power of producing various kinds of sounds from its throat These sounds may be broadly classified under the two heads, *Dhvanyātmaka* and *Varnātmaka* Cattle and the other creatures which we call 'dumb animals' produce the first type of sound whenever they desire to express their feelings of joy, pain and the like Man, on the other hand, has perfected the device and is capable of producing the latter type of sound This type consists in the uttering of definite and known sounds or *vyaktaśabdas* These are the *aksaras* or the alphabets and their collection forms the language The expression *aksara* means 'from अ to क्ष', the first and the last letters in the Sanskrit alphabet A language the letters in the alphabets of which do not have definite sounds is supposed to be defective and is called a *Mlecchabhāsā* Hence the following definition —

म्लेच्छोऽव्यक्तशब्दः ॥

For instance, in the English language, the letter *C* has the sound of *S* in some places and that of *K* in some others. Likewise, the vowel *U* has the pronunciation of the Sanskrit letter अ in the word 'but' and that of the Sanskrit letter उ in the word 'put' Similarly the sound represented by the Sanskrit letter क is denoted by all the three letters

of the English alphabet, *C*, *K* and *Q* depending on the word in which the sound occurs

A language such as the English which has no definite phonetics makes it difficult for one to master all its pronunciations One might have obtained the degree of 'Master of Arts' in it and yet not be able to pronounce certain letters in certain words properly On the other hand in the case of a language like Sanskrit once the alphabet is thoroughly mastered, the pronunciations can be completely understood This is because the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet have definite *samskāras* or rules to regulate their pronunciations Indeed the word 'Samskrt' itself means 'that which has letters in its alphabet with definite *samskāras*'[1] It is also known as *aksamālā* because its alphabet starts with अ and ends with क्ष

Sanskrit is considered to be the language of the Gods and its alphabet is considered to be capable of representing any conceivable kind of sound It is said that certain letters present in the alphabets of other languages are absent in Sanskrit and, as examples of these, the letters ழ and ஃ of the Tamil language and *F* of the English language are mentioned But a close examination makes it clear that even these sounds can be expressed in Sanskrit For instance, the *āyda* letter of the tamil language, ஃ, occurs in the pronunciation of the *visarga*, ' ' in combinations, such as (राम.+करुणाकर) Similarly, when the *visarga* is followed by the consonant प, the pronunciation approximating to the English letter *F* occurs, as in the combinations, (राम.+पण्डित), and (वृक्ष +फलम्)

Another defect pointed out by critics is the absence of the letter ள of the Tamil language in Sanskrit. This sound,

however, exists in Sanskrit and its pronunciation is recognised even in Vedic texts For instance, the sentence of the *śruti*, (अग्निमीडे) occurring in the *Yajurveda* is of the form, (अग्निमीळे) in the *Rgvedic* recension and the final letter in it is pronounced as though it were the Tamil ள Indeed in the Mahratta form of the Sanskrit script there are two separate letters for the two '*Las*' *viz*, ल and ळ

The letters of the alphabet or *aksaras* are also known as *varna* Another term used to describe them is *lipi* but this expression denotes the written symbols for the letters There may be several *lipis* for the same language as, for instance, when the Sanskrit letters are written in the scripts of the *Devanāgarī*, *Marāthi*, *Telugu*, *Canarese*, *Malayālam*, *Gujarāti* and *Bengāli* languages Likewise the same script or *lipi* may be used to express the sounds of several languages, as happens to be the case with most of the European languages all of which use the Roman script

While on the subject of languages it will be of interest to point out one feature of the Telugu language which is not shared by most others Of all Indian languages this is the one most akin to *Śivasvarūpa* Its letters have a rounded shape and the rounding is done from left to right or in the *vāmabhāga* style, which is the style most suited to *Sakti* Before the letters of the alphabet are taught to the young student of Telugu at the time of his *aksarābhyāsa*, he is initiated into the *sadāksara* (ओं नम शिवाय), no matter to what sect he belongs or what deity he worships The language of Telugu may, therefore, be said to be one wherein *Śiva* is given greater prominence This language may hence be considered to conform to the definition of the poet, *Kālidāsa*, in the following verse of his in which he

says that the letter and its meaning are, respectively, the *Sakti* and the *Sivasvarūpas* —

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।
जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥

—*Raghuvamśa, I-1*

Two other reasons for the *Andhradeśa* being more devoted to *Siva* than any other part of the country are its being bounded by three important *Sivalingas*, viz, *Kotilinga* in the north, *Srīśaila* in the west and *Kālahāsti* in the south, (hence the name, *Telingu* or *Telugu* from the Sanskrit word, *Trilinga*) and its principal *śākhā* of the *veda* being the one most devoted to *Siva* viz, the *Yajurveda*. These reasons have even made the great Tamil Philosopher and *Saivaite* devotee, *Appayya Dīksitar*, long for nativity of the *Andhradeśa*, a wish he expresses in the following verse of his —

आन्ध्रत्वमान्ध्रभाषा चाप्यान्ध्रदेशस्वजन्मभूः ।
तत्रापि याजुषी शाखा नाल्पस्य तपसः फलम् ॥

Ancient inscriptions available to us show that in the beginning there were only two types of written scripts or *lipis*, known as the *brahmalipi* and the *kharosthī lipi*. The former has given rise to the Aryan group of scripts, while the latter forms the basis of languages such as *Persian*, *Arabic* etc, the term, *kharosthī*, meaning the lips of a donkey, having been applied to the latter in view of its letters resembling the projecting lips of that animal.

It may relevantly be asked what is the use of all this to man, who, after all, does not seem to be happy for possessing these, unlike the lower orders of creation which, in spite of their want of a language such as we have, appear to be eternally happy without being troubled by the thoughts

and worries of the morrow The answer to this is simple The possession of language is but another *sādhana* which should enable us to quell all desires in us and release us from the never-ending cycle of births and deaths This chief value of language should not be lost sight of in the thought that, at the moment, we are using it only to cover ourselves more and more with sin!

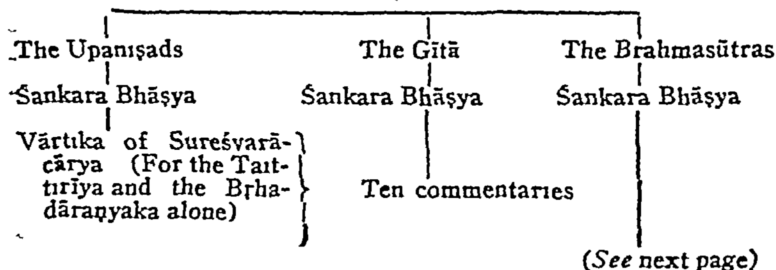
CHAPTER XLI

ADVAITA OR THE PHILOSOPHY OF NON-DUALISM

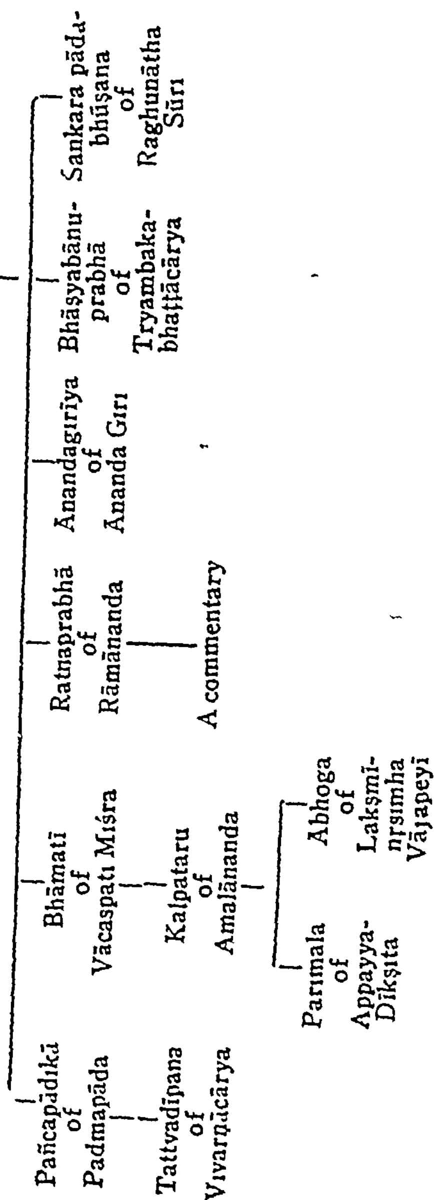
The principal books among the scriptures of the Hindus which contain all the essential tenets of their religion are the *Upanisads* among the *Vedas*, the *Bhagavadgītā* from the *Purānic* literature and the *Brahmasūtras* of *Vedavyāsa* among the books of the *Saddarśanas*. These three works are collectively known as the *Prasthānatrayas* of the Hindus. The texts contained in these have received a good deal of attention at the hands of religious teachers, reformers and commentators from time to time Thus *Sankara* was the first among the three great *Ācāryas* to write commentaries on these principal scriptural texts The views of *Sankara* as expounded in these commentaries or *Bhāsyas* are according to the view-point of the *advaitic* or non-dualistic school of philosophy which he championed The rival views of the *Viśistādvaita* and the *Dvaita* schools which sprang up later on, have, naturally enough, given rise to a set of literature which may be described as being condemnatory The works of condemnation by one school of thought have necessarily provoked replies and rejoinders from the followers of the school attacked and, in this way, an interesting series of what may be termed as condemnatory and counter-condemnatory or *khandana-pratikhandana* literature has sprung up The works relating to any particular school of Indian philosophy may, hence, be divided into two groups *viz*, the purely exponental ones and the condemnatory and counter-condemnatory ones.

According to this classification the literature devoted to the exposition and advocacy of the advaitic school of philosophical thought may be arranged into the following two groups —

I. THE EXPONENTAL SERIES



(*See* next page)



See previous page
Sankara's Bhāṣya of The Brahma Sūtras-(Sūtra-Bhāṣya)
Pañcapādikā of Padmapāda
Tattvadīpana of Vivaraṇācārya
Bhāmatī of Vācaspati Miśra
Kalpataru of Amalānanda
Parimala of Appayya-Dīkṣita
Ābhoga of Lakṣmī-nṛsiṃha Vājapeyī
Ratnaprabhā of Rāmānanda
A commentary
Ānandagiriya of Ānanda Giri
Bhāṣyabānu-prabhā of Tryambaka-bhaṭṭācārya
Sankara pāda-bhūṣana of Raghunātha Sūri

II. THE CONDEMNATORY

(a) *First Series —*

Advaitapara	*Dvaitapara*	*Viśiṣṭādvaitapara*
Prabodhacandrodayam of Kṛṣṇa Miśra		Sankalpa Sūryodayam of Vedānta Deśika
	Ubhayagrīsarihūdayam of Madvācārya	

(b) *Second Series —*

Advaitapara	*Dvaitapara*	*Viśiṣṭādvaitapara*
	Nyāyāmṛta of 400 years ago	
Advaita Siddhi of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī	Taraṅgiṇī of a Mādhva	
Candrikā or Gauḍa brahmānandiya of Brahmānanda	Vanamālāmiśrīya of Vanamālā Miśra	Nyāya bhāskara of Ānandāḻvār
Siddhāntavaijayantī of Tryambakabhaṭṭācārya		
Nyāyenduśekhara of Rāju Śāstrī		Nyāya bhāskara of Ānandāḻvār

With this preliminary account of the works relating to the *advaita* philosophy, we may now proceed to the study of that philosophy itself What is *advaita*? That which is not a duality is *advaita* But what do we see before us in daily life? A multiplicity of objects, not to talk of duality How can all this be considered one and the same?

It has already been mentioned more than once in former chapters that three states of existence are noticeable in our life, *viz*, the waking or *jāgrat*, the dream or *svapna* and the deep sleep or *susupti avasthās*. An examination of these states of being affords a clue to the understanding of the advaitic view of life The *Jāgrat avasthā* is obviously intended for doing our various *karmas* and the *susupti* state, for allowing our body sufficient rest so that, on waking up, it may have vigour enough to start on its career of performing its *karmas* once again Where is the need for the *svapna* or dream state? It seems as though God has provided for this extra state of existence with the specific object of demonstrating to the world the truth of the advaitic view of life

During the dream state we experience a world as full of beings and objects as we come across in the world of the waking state, but at the end of the dream all these disappear leaving behind the one object which experienced the dream, *viz.*, the soul Likewise, the seemingly real world of the waking state should also disappear, the moment its falseness is realised, leaving behind the one and only cause of all this Universe Thus the non-dual nature of the *Paramātmā* is established

So long as we take the manifested objects of this Universe as so many different entities we are dualists or *dvaitins* When the truth of the ultimate oneness of everything is realised, we become *advaitins* Vedic support for

the advaitic view can be quoted in plenty We have first the famous *Māndūkyopanisad* in which, wherever the *Pranava* and the *Brahmasvarūpa* are mentioned, the term *advaita* is used Then again there is the well-known passage in the *Brhadāranyakopanisad* wherein it is said that, where there is a duality, there may be a seer and an object seen, a hearer and an object heard and so on, but when all is one, the seer and the seen become one and the same, the hearer and the heard are the same and so on

यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति । तदितर इतरं पश्यति, यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत्, तत्केन कं पश्येत् ... . ।

—*Brhadāranyakopanisad*, IV-5-(xv)

It is sometimes pointed out as an objection against the above view that the reference to the all-pervading Soul in the above passage is the term *Ātmā* and not, as it should be, if the passage is to be taken as supporting the advaitic view, *Paramātmā* The answer to this doubt is quite simple and would hardly take half the time the question does The need for a *Paramātmā* being specified would arise only when the existence of a lower order of *ātmā* is conceded But in the advaidic conception there is only one entity pervading through the Universe and it is enough if we describe it as the Soul or *Ātmā* There is place for a scrupulous distinction between the *Paramātmā* and the *Jīvātmā* only in the scheme of things according to the dvaitic view-point

The *Śruti* defines the non-dualistic state as that which cannot be reached by the spoken word and the mind

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह ॥

—*Taittirīyopanisad*

When the mind can reach It we have a being which 'comprehends' and One which is being 'comprehended'—a state of duality Hence, the above definition!

Then again the text of another *Upanisad* says that He is not known to one who says he knows, and is known to one who says he knows not

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

—*Kenopanisad*

Another passage in the same scripture states the advaitic truth in a pointed manner

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनोमतम् ।

—*Kenopanisad*

This passage means that the Supreme Being is not comprehended by the mind, on the other hand, It is responsible for all that the mind thinks The things which the mind thinks about are all false and That which makes the mind do all this thinking is the one and only truth It is like everything that is seen in a dream being unreal, the seer in the dream alone being real

Now what is the use of all this to us?—it may relevantly be asked We said in a previous chapter that the root-cause of all our ills in this life is the craving of the senses which we call desire or *āśā* Once this desire is quelled, even death is conquered and our spiritual salvation attained Desire arises only out of a recognition of the existence of objects and beings external to and different from us. When we realise the true advaitic nature of the world, desire vanishes and, with it, most of our sinful acts which it gives rise to And desire being quelled, the attainment of spiritual salvation is facilitated

CHAPTER XLII

A GARLAND OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (PRAŚNOTTARA-RATNAMĀLIKĀ)

Ādi Śankara is credited with the authorship of a large number of works on religion and philosophy. One of the easiest of these is the work known as the *Praśnottara Ratnamālikā* (प्रश्नोत्तर रत्नमालिका) A free translation of this is given below, the original text also being furnished side by side. The answers to the various questions put by the enquirer, contained in these *ślokas*, expound some of the cardinal beliefs of the Hindus

कः खलु नालंक्रियते दृष्टादृष्टार्थसाधनपटीयान् ।
अमुया कण्ठस्थितया प्रश्नोत्तररत्नमालिकया ॥ १

This is a prefatory verse and states that whoever desires to attain salvation will doubtless find a study of this work beneficial.

भगवन् किमुपादेयं गुरुवचनं हेयमपि च किमकार्यम् ।
को गुरुरधिगततत्त्वः शिष्यहितायोद्यतः सततम् ॥ २

(1) *Q*—Which is it that is worthy of being learnt?
A—The words of the preceptor

(2) *Q*—Which should be discarded?
A—That which is a bad deed.

(3) *Q*—Who is the preceptor?

Note—Q=Question A=Answer.

A —He who has known the truth and who cares for the spiritual welfare of his disciples

त्वरितं किं कर्तव्यं विदुषां ससारसततिच्छेदः ।
किं मोक्षतरोर्बीज सम्यग्ज्ञानं क्रियासिद्धम् ॥ ३

(4) *Q* —Which is it that should be done quickly?

A —The cutting of the bond of *Samsāra* or the chain of life and death.

(5) *Q* —Which is the seed for the tree of *moksa* or spiritual salvation?

A —The understanding of things in their true perspective and the exhibition of that understanding in action

कः पथ्यतरो धर्मः कः शुचिरिह यस्य मानस शुद्धम् ।
कः पण्डितो विवेकी किं विषमवधीरणा गुरुषु ॥ ४

(6) *Q* —Which has a soothing effect?

A —*Dharma* or the performance of righteous deeds

(7) *Q* —Who is the pure man?

A —He whose mind is free from blemish.

(8) *Q* —Who is the learned?

A —He who has knowledge

(9) *Q* —Which is poison?

A —The disregarding of the advice of elders.

किं ससारे सारं बहुशोऽपि विचिन्त्यमानमिदमेव ।
किं मनुजेष्विष्टतमं स्वपरहितायोद्यत जन्म ॥ ५

(10) *Q* —Which is it that interests in life?

A —The meditation that there is really nothing to interest us in life, in other words, the endeavour to snap the cords of attachment

(11) *Q* —Which is it that should be desired?

A —A life dedicated to the good and welfare of one's self as well as others

मदिरेव मोहजनकः कः स्नेहः के च दस्यवो विषयाः ।
का भववल्ली तृष्णा को वैरी यस्त्वनुद्योगः ॥ ६

(12) *Q* —Which is it that produces intoxication like a liquor?

A.—Attachment to worldly objects and beings.

(13) *Q* —Who are the real thieves?

A —The objects which allure the senses

(14) *Q* —Which is the binding cord of life?

A —Desire.

(15) *Q* —Who is the real enemy?

A —Laziness

कस्माद्भयमिह मरणादन्धादिह को विशिष्यते रागी ।
कः शूरो यो ललनालोचनबाणैर्न च व्यथितः ॥ ७

(16) *Q* —Of what is everybody afraid?

A —Death

(17) *Q* —Who is blinder than the blind?

A —He who has desires

(18) *Q* —Who is the valorous one?

A —He who guards himself against vices

पातु कर्णाञ्जलिभिः किममृतमिह युज्यते सदुपदेशः ।
किं गुरुताया मूल यदेतदप्रार्थन नाम ॥ ८

(19) *Q* —Which is it that forms meet food for the ears?

A —The teachings of the sages

(20) *Q* —How can respect be commanded?

A —By asking for no favours.

किं गहनं स्त्रीचरितं कश्चतुरो यो न खण्डितस्तेन ।
किं दुःखमसंतोषः किं लाघवमधमतो याच्ञा ॥ ९

(21) *Q* —Which is it that cannot be measured?
A —The gait of women

(22) *Q* ·—Who is the clever one?
A —He who is not deceived by women's gait.

(23) *Q* ·—What is poverty?
A —Discontent.

(24) *Q* —What is lowliness?
A —Begging alms from a lowly person.

किं जीवितमनवद्यं किं जाड्यं पाठतोऽप्यनभ्यासः ।
को जागर्ति विवेकी का निद्रा मूढता जन्तोः ॥ १०

(25) *Q* —Which is the highest living?
A —A life without blemishes.

(26) *Q* —What constitutes lack of knowledge?
A —Learning which is not put into practice.

(27) *Q* —Who is the wakeful?
A —He who has knowledge.

(28) *Q* ·—What is sleep?
A —Ignorance.

नलिनीदलगतजलवत्तरलं किं यौवन धनं चायुः ।
कथय पुनः के शशिनः किरणसमाः सज्जना एव ॥ ११

(29) *Q* —Which has as unstable an existence as the water drop on the lotus leaf?

A.—Youth, wealth and age.

(30) *Q* —Whose life is as soothing to others as the cool rays of the moon?

A —The life of good men.

को नरकः परवशता किं सौख्यं सर्वसङ्गविरतिर्या ।
किं साध्यं भूतहितं प्रियं च किं प्राणिनामसवः ॥ १२

(31) *Q*.—Which is hell?

A.—To have to live with and under the patronage of others.

(32) *Q*.—What is happiness?

A.—Renunciation for the sake of others.

(33) *Q*.—Which is worthy of being achieved?

A.—Being of help to others.

(34) *Q*.—Which is most dear to living beings?

A.—Their life-breath

कोऽनर्थफलो मानः का सुखदा साधुजनमैत्री ।
सर्वव्यसनविनाशे को दक्षः सर्वथा त्यागी ॥ १३

(35) *Q*.—What results in dire consequences?

A.—Pride

(36) *Q*.—What brings about real happiness?

A.—The company of good men

(37) *Q*.—Who is the clever man in getting rid of sorrow?

A.—He who gives in, desiring nothing for himself

किं मरणं मूर्खत्वं किं चानर्घं यदवसरे दत्तम् ।
आमरणात्किं शल्यं प्रच्छन्नं यत्कृतं पापम् ॥ १४

(38) *Q*.—Which is worse than death?

A.—Foolishness

(39) *Q*.—Which is priceless?

A.—A timely gift

(40) *Q*.—Which is it that pricks one's conscience till death?

A —A sin committed on the sly.

कुत्र विधेयो यत्नो विद्याभ्यासे सदौषधे दाने ।
अवधीरणा क्व कार्या खलपरयोषित्परधनेषु ॥ १५

(41) *Q* —For what is endeavour worth while?
A —Education, charity and health

(42) *Q* —Which is to be discarded?
A —Badmen, other men's wives and other people's belongings.

काहर्निशमनुचिन्त्या संसारासारता न तु प्रमदा ।
का प्रेयसी विधेया करुणा दीनेषु सज्जने मैत्री ॥ १६

(43) *Q* —Which is to be always borne in mind?
A —That there is nothing to interest us in life.

(44) *Q* —Which should be made the object of endearment?
A —Mercy towards the helpless and the friendship of good and pious men,

कण्ठगतैरप्यसुभि. कस्य ह्यात्मान शक्यते जेतुम् ।
मूर्खस्य शङ्कितस्य च विषादिनो वा कृतघ्नस्य ॥ १७

(45) *Q* —Who cannot turn their minds into the right path?
A —The scoundrels, the ever-doubting, the pessimists and the ungrateful persons.

कः साधुः सद्वृत्तः कमधममाचक्षते त्वसद्वृत्तम् ।
केन जितं जगदेतत्सत्यतिक्षावता पुसा ॥ १८

(46) *Q* —Who is the pious one?
A —He who is well-behaved

(47) *Q* —Who is the worst among men?
A —He who has bad ways

(48) *Q* —Who can conquer the world?
A —Whoever has truth and patience

कस्मै नमांसि देवा. कुर्वन्ति दयाप्रधानाय ।
कस्मादुद्वेगः स्यात् ससारारण्यतः सुधियः ॥ १९

(49) *Q* —Who is worshipped even by the gods?
A.—He who is merciful

(50) *Q* —Which is to be dreaded against?
A —The forest of life on this earth

कस्य वशे प्राणिगण. सत्यप्रियभाषिणो विनीतस्य ।
क स्थातव्य न्याय्ये पथि दृष्टादृष्टलाभाढ्ये ॥ २०

(51) *Q* —By whom can living beings be subjugated?
A —By him whose words are full of truth and affection

(52) *Q* —Which is the proper way for earning riches?
A —The path of virtue and justice.

कोऽन्धो योऽकार्यरत. को बधिरो यो हितानि न शृणोति ।
को मूको यः काले प्रियाणि वक्तु न जानाति ॥ २१

(53) *Q* —Who is the blind man?
A —One who, though learned, does bad deeds

(54) *Q* —Who is the deaf man?
A —Whoever does not listen to good advice.

(55) *Q* —Who is the dumb man?
A —Whoever cannot utter good words at the proper moment

किं दानमनाकाङ्क्ष किं मित्र यो निवारयति पापात् ।
कोऽलङ्कार शील किं वाचा मण्डन सत्यम् ॥ २२

(56) *Q* —Which is a gift?
A —That which is given unasked for

(57) *Q* —Who is a friend?
A —Whoever prevents us from committing sin

(58) *Q* —Which is beauty?
A —Good behaviour

(59) *Q* —What constitutes the beauty of the tongue?
A —Speaking the truth

विद्युद्विलसितचपलं किं दुर्जनसंगिर्युवतयश्च ।
कुलशीलनिष्प्रकम्पाः के कलिकालेऽपि सज्जना एव ॥ २३

(60) *Q* —What produces grief?
A —The company of bad men and women

(61) *Q* —Who are those who do not get fed up with leading a good life even in this *kali* age?
A —The virtuous and pious men

चिन्तामणिरिव दुर्लभमिह किं कथयामि तच्चतुर्भद्रम् ।
किं तद्वदन्ति भूयो विधूततमसो विशेषेण ॥ २४
दानं प्रियवाक्सहित ज्ञानमगर्वं क्षमान्वित शौर्यम् ।
वित्त त्यागसमेत दुर्लभमेतच्चतुर्भद्रम् ॥ २५

(62) *Q* —Which is as rare as a precious gem?
A —The four qualities collectively known as the *caturbhadra* viz, Gift followed by soothing words, knowledge without pride, valour with mercy and forgiving, and wealth with sacrifice.

किं शोच्यं कार्पण्य सति विभवे किं प्रशस्तमौदार्यम् ।
कः पूज्यो विद्वद्भिः स्वभावतः सर्वदा विनीतो य ॥ २६

(63) *Q* —Which is to be pitied?
A —Selfish miserliness

(64) *Q* —Which is praiseworthy?
A —The quality of being merciful towards other beings

(65) *Q* —Whom do the wise men worship?

A —The naturally humble men i e, not those who feign to be humble just to secure their objects, but those who really practise the virtue of humility [1]

कः कुलकमलदिनेशः सति गुणविभवेऽपि यो नम्रः ।
कस्य वशे जगदेतत् प्रियहितवचनस्य धर्मनिरतस्य ॥ २७

(66) *Q* —At the sight of which sun will the lotus of our life bloom?

A —Real humility

(67) *Q* —Who can conquer this world?

A —He who speaks gently and does good deeds.

विद्वन्मनोहरा का सत्कविता बोधवनिता च ।
कं न स्पृशति विपत्तिः प्रवृद्धवचनानुवर्तिनं दान्तम् ॥ २८

(68) *Q* —Which is capable of capturing the minds of the learned?

A —Good poetry and intelligent women.

(69) *Q* —Whom can disaster not overtake?

A —One who listens to the words of elders and one who is humble in behaviour

कस्मै स्पृहयति कमला त्वनलसचित्ताय नीतिवृत्ताय ।
त्यजति च कं सहसा द्विजगुरुसुरनिन्दाकरं च सालस्यम् ॥ २९

(70) *Q* —Whom does *Lakṣmī*, the Goddess of wealth, like?

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1 *Note* —There is a verse in which the pseudo humble person is likened to a pecottah (a type of water-lift used by Indian agriculturists) which bows its head in order to fetch the water from the well, but which stands erect as soon as its object is fulfilled,

A —One who has a pure mind and does not swerve from the path of righteousness

(71) *Q* —Whom does she desert?

A —The lazy man who abuses the brahmins, the teachers and the gods

कुत्र विधेयो वासः सज्जननिकटेऽथवा काश्याम् ।
कः परिहार्यो देशः पिशुनयुतो लुब्धभूपश्च ॥ ३०

(72) *Q* —Which is the fittest place to dwell in?

A —The neighbourhood of good men and the holy city of Benares

(73) *Q*.—Which is the place not fit to be lived in?

A —The neighbourhood of low people and the kingdom of a miserly ruler

केनाशोच्यः पुरुषः प्रणतकलत्रेण धीरविभवेन ।
इह भुवने कः शोच्यः सत्यपि विभवे न यो दाता ॥ ३१

(74) *Q* —What can free a man from misery and sorrow?

A —A dutiful wife and wealth than can endure.

(75) *Q* —Who deserves to be miserable?

A —He who has but will not give

किं लघुताया मूलं प्राकृतपुरुषेषु या याच्ञा ।
रामादपि कः शूरः स्मरशरनिहतो न यश्चलति ॥ ३२

(76) *Q* —Which is despicable?

A —To beg of the lowly

(77) *Q* —Who is more valorous than Rāma?

A —One who is unaffected by cupid's arrows

किमहर्निशमनुचिन्त्यं भगवच्चरणं न संसारः ।
चक्षुष्मन्तोऽप्यन्धाः के स्युर्येनास्तिका मनुजाः ॥ ३३

(78) *Q* —Which should be contemplated upon both during day and night?

A —The holy feet of the Almighty, not this world and our life in it

(79) *Q* —Who can be called blind, though possessing eyes?

A —The *Nāstikas* or those who do not believe in the *Vedas*

क· पङ्गुरिह प्रथितो व्रजति च यो वार्धके तीर्थम् ।
किं तीर्थमपि च मुख्य चित्तमल यन्निवर्तयति ॥ ३४

(80) *Q* —Who is a lame man?

A —One who starts on a pilgrimage to the holy *tīrthas* or sacred waters late in his life

(81) *Q* —Which is the holiest among the sacred waters?

A —That which cleanses us of the dirt surrounding the mind

किं स्मर्तव्य पुरुषैर्हरिनाम सदा न यावनी भाषा ।
को हि न वाच्य सुधिया परदोषश्चानृतं तद्वत् ॥ ३५

(82) *Q* —What merits meditation by men?

A —The name of the Lord Almighty, not any of the foreign languages

(83) *Q* —What cannot be uttered by a good man?

A —Whatever is not truth and the faults of others.

किं सपाद्य मनुजैर्विद्या वित्त बल यश पुण्यम् ।
क सर्वगुणविनाशी लोभ शत्रुश्च क काम ॥ ३६

(84) *Q* —Which is worthy of being acquired?

A —Learning, wealth, valour, fame and good deeds

(85) *Q*.—Which destroys all good qualities?
A.—Miserliness.

(86) *Q*:—Who is the real enemy?
A.—Lust for women.

का च सभा परिहार्या हीना या वृद्धसचिवेन ।
इह कुत्रावहितः स्यान्मनुजः किल राजसेवायाम् ॥ ३७

(87) *Q*.—Which assembly should be avoided?
A.—An assembly devoid of old and experienced councillors.

(88) *Q*.—In what matters should one be careful in this world?
A.—In regard to the service of the king.

प्राणादपि को रम्यः कुलधर्मः साधुसङ्गश्च ।
का संरक्ष्या कीर्तिः पतिव्रता नैजबुद्धिश्च ॥ ३८

(89) *Q*.—Which is dearer to us than life?
A.—The rites and observances prescribed for one's caste and the company of good men.

(90) *Q*.—Which should be preserved?
A.—Fame, chastity and one's own knowledge.

का कल्पलता लोके सच्छिष्यायार्पिता विद्या ।
कोऽक्षयवटवृक्षः स्याद्विधिवत्सत्पात्रदत्तदानं यत् ॥ ३९

(91) *Q*.—Which is like the climber of plenty in this world?
A.—The knowledge imparted to a good and deserving disciple.

(92) *Q*.—Which is comparable to the useful banyan tree (*Ficus bengalensis*)?
A.—A gift made according to the prescribed rites to a deserving person.

किं शस्त्रं सर्वेषां युक्तिर्माता च का धेनुः ।
किं नु बलं यद्धैर्यं को मृत्युर्यदवधानरहितत्वम् ॥ ४०

(93) *Q* —Which is the weapon which everyone possesses?

A —Reasoning

(94) *Q* —Who is the mother of all?

A —The cow

(95) *Q* —Which is the army?

A —Bravery

(96) *Q* —Who is *Yama*?

A —Indifference

कुत्र विषं दुष्टजने किमिहाशौचं भवेदृणं नृणाम् ।
किमभयमिह वैराग्यं भयमपि किं वित्तमेव सर्वेषाम् ॥ ४१

(97) *Q* —Which is the abode of poison?

A —Vicious men

(98) *Q* —Which is the worst of all pollutions?

A —Debt [1]

(99) *Q* —Which is the state of fearlessness?

A —Renunciation.

(100) *Q* —What begets fear?

A —The possession of wealth

का दुर्लभा नराणां हरिभक्तिः पातकं च किं हिंसा ।
को हि भगवत्प्रियः स्याद्योऽन्यं नोद्वेजयेदनुद्विग्नः ॥ ४२

1 *Note* —The peculiar aptness of this simile is note worthy A polluted person should avoid certain localities such as temples and other holy places, as he is prohibited from entering the same, likewise, a debtor avoids the rest of the mankind, his creditors, lest they should demand the money back, and the others, out of a sense of shame

(101) *Q* —Which is rare to achieve?
A —The devotion of the lord

(102) *Q* —What is sin?
A —Cruelty to others

(103) *Q* —Who is the most beloved of the gods?
A —He who does not feel injured in his mind and does not injure others

कस्मात् सिद्धिस्तपसो बुद्धि. क नु भूसुरे कुतो बुद्धिः ।
वृद्धोपसेवया के वृद्धा ये धर्मतत्त्वज्ञा ॥ ४३

(104) *Q* —What can enable a man to do whatever he likes?
A —Penance

(105) *Q* —What produces penance?
A —Enlightenment

(106) *Q* —Where does enlightenment reside?
A —With the brahmin

(107) *Q* —Which is real enlightenment?
A —That which is attained through devotion and service to a teacher

(108) *Q* —Who are the elders?
A —Those who have understood the correct import of the scriptures—though they may be young in age.

सभावितस्य मरणादधिक किं दुर्यशो भवति ।
लोके सुखी भवेत् को धनवान् धनमपि च किं यतश्रेष्ठम् ॥ ४४

(109) *Q* —To one who is renowned which is worse than death?
A —Notoriety

(110) *Q* —Who is the man who enjoys?
A —The wealthy one

(111) *Q* —What is wealth?

A —That which enables a man to satisfy his desires

सर्वसुखानां बीज किं पुण्यं दु'खमपि कुतः पापात् ।
कस्यैश्वर्यं य' किल शङ्करमाराधयेद्भक्त्या ॥ ४५

(112) *Q* —Which is the root cause of nappiness?
A —The performance of good deeds.

(113) *Q* —Which is the root cause of misery?
A —Sin

(114) *Q* —Who gets riches?
A —One who worships the lord Śankara with devotion?

को वर्धते विनीतः को वा हीयेत यो दृप्त ।
को न प्रत्येतव्यो ब्रूते यश्चानृत शश्वत् ॥ ४६

(115) *Q* —Who deserves success?
A —The really humble person

(116) *Q* —Who would incur losses in life?
A —The proud man,

(117) *Q* —Who should not be trusted?
A —The habitual liar

कुत्रानृतेऽप्यपाप यच्चोक्त धर्मरक्षार्थम् ।
को धर्मोऽभिमतो य शिष्टाना निजकुलीनानाम् । ४७

(118) *Q* —When is lying not a sin?
A —When it is uttered in due performance of one's duties

(119) *Q* —What is one's duty?
A —The performance of the traditional acts of one's race

साधुबल किं दैव क साधुः सर्वदा तुष्ट' ।
दैव किं यत्सुकृत क सुकृती श्लाघ्यते च यः सद्भिः ॥ ४८

(120) *Q* —Which is the strength of the pious men?
A —God.

(121) *Q* —Who is the pious man?
A —The every-joyous person.

(122) *Q* —Which is god?
A —Their own good deeds.

(123) *Q* —Who is the performer of good deeds?
A —He who is praised by the good men.

गृहमेधिनश्च मित्रं किं भार्या को गृही च यो यजते ।
को यज्ञो यः श्रुत्या विहितः श्रेयस्करो नृणाम् ॥ ४९

(124) *Q* —Who is the friend of the house-holder?
A —His wife

(125) *Q* —Who is a house-holder?
A —Whoever performs the vedic sacrificial rites

(126) *Q* —Which is a sacrificial rite?
A —That which is prescribed in the *Vedas*.

कस्य क्रिया हि सफला यः पुनराचारवाञ्छिष्टः ।
कः शिष्टो यो वेदप्रमाणवान् को हतः क्रियाभ्रष्टः ॥ ५०

(127) *Q* —Whose deeds will be effective?
A —The deeds of a believer in the *Vedas* and one who observes orthodoxy.

(128) *Q* —Who is dead even while being alive?
A —He who does not perform the actions prescribed for him.

को धन्यः सन्यासी को मान्यः पण्डितः साधुः ।
कः सेव्यो यो दाता को दाता योऽर्थितृप्तिमातनुते ॥ ५१

(129) *Q* —Who is the rich?
A —The ascetic.

(130) *Q* —Who is the worshipful one?
A —The learned and pious man

(131) Q.—Who is worthy of being served upon?
A.—The giver.

(132) Q.—Who is the giver?
A.—He who gives to the receiver's heart's content.

किं भाग्यं देहवतामारोग्यं कः फली कृषिकृत् ।
कस्य न पापं जपतः कः पूर्णो यः प्रजावान् स्यात् ॥ ५२

(133) Q.—Which is the greatest enjoyment?
A.—Health.

(134) Q.—Who enjoys the fruits of labour?
A.—One who endeavours.

(135) Q.—Who will not be affected by sin?
A.—One who always meditates on God.

(136) Q.—Who has plenty?
A.—He who has good sons.

किं दुष्करं नराणां यन्मनसो निग्रहः सततम् ।
को ब्रह्मचर्यवान् स्याद्यश्चास्खलितोर्ध्वरेतस्कः ॥ ५३

(137) Q.—Which is difficult to perform?
A.—The subjugation of the mind.

(138) Q.—Who is the real celibate?
A.—He who has the *Urdhvaretas*.

का च परदेवतोक्ता चिच्छक्तिः को जगद्भर्ता ।
सूर्यः सर्वेषां को वा जीवनहेतुः स पर्जन्यः ॥ ५४

(139) Q.—Who is the god of all the Universe?
A.—*Sakti* in her aspect as the *Jnanasakti* or the Goddess embodiment of knowledge.

(140) Q.—Who is the husband (protector) of this Universe?

A —The Sun-God, *Sūrya*, as he is the giver of food to all the created beings in this world

(141) *Q* —What makes life possible?

A —Rain.

क· शूरो यो भीतत्राता त्राता च कः स गुरुः ।
को हि जगद्गुरुरुक्तः शम्भुर्ज्ञानं कुतः शिवादेव ॥ ५५

(142) *Q* —Who is the valiant man?

A —The protector of one who fears.

(143) *Q* —Who is a protector?

A —The true preceptor.

(144) *Q* —Who is the teacher of all the worlds?

A —The Lord Almighty

(145) *Q* —Whence does knowledge come?

A —From Him, our Lord.

मुक्तिं लभेत कस्मान्मुकुन्दभक्तेर्मुकुन्दः क. ।
यस्तारयेदविद्या का चाविद्या यदात्मनोऽस्फूर्तिः ॥ ५६

(146) *Q* —How can salvation be attained?

A —By devotion to Lord *Mukunda*,

(147) *Q* —Who is *Mukunda*?

A —He who helps us to overcome ignorance

(148) *Q* —What is ignorance?

A —That which makes us forget the real nature of the soul.

कस्य न शोको य· स्यादक्रोधः किं सुखं तुष्टिः ।
को राजा रञ्जनकृत् कश्च श्वा नीचसेवको य· स्यात् ॥ ५७

(149) *Q* —Who is free from sorrow?

A —One who has quelled anger.

(150) *Q* —Which is real happiness?

A —The inner laugh—not the visible outer one

(151) *Q* —Who is the king?

A —He who has none else to equal him

(152) *Q* —Who is a dog among men?

A —He who serves the lowly persons

को मायी परमेश. क इन्द्रजालायते प्रपञ्चोऽयम् ।
कः स्वप्ननिभो जाग्रद्व्यवहारः सत्यमपि च किं ब्रह्म ॥ ५८

(153) *Q* —Who is the conqueror of *Māyā* or the great illusion of this Universe?

A —The Lord *Parameśvara*

(154) *Q* —Which is magic?

A —This very world

(155) *Q* —Which is like a dream?

A —The affairs of this world as experienced during the wakeful state

(156) *Q* —Which is the ultimate Truth?

A —The *Parabrahman* or the Supreme All-pervading Soul

किं मिथ्या यद्विद्यानाश्य तुच्छ तु शशविषाणादि ।
का चानिर्वचनीया माया किं कल्पित द्वैतम् ॥ ५९

(157) *Q* —Which is destroyed by knowledge?

A —Untruth

(158) —Which is the meanest of all things?

A —'Hare's horn' and the like

(159) *Q* —Which is it that cannot be stated as either true or false?

A —*Māyā* or Illusion

(160) *Q* —What lesson does *Māyā* teach?

A —*Dvaita* or the dualistic nature of things

किं पारमार्थिकं स्याद्द्वैतं चाज्ञता कुतोऽनादिः ।
वपुषश्च पोषकं किं प्रारब्ध चान्नदायि किं चायुः ॥ ६०

(161) *Q* —Which is the real Truth?
A —*Advaita* or Non-dualism

(162) *Q* —By what is Ignorance produced?
A —Ignorance has no beginning

(163) *Q* —What feeds the body?
A —*Karma* or Fate.

(164) *Q* —Who is the giver of food?
A —Age

को ब्राह्मणैरुपास्यो गायत्र्यर्काग्निगोचरः शम्भु' ।
गायत्र्यामादित्ये चाग्नौ शम्भौ च किं नु तत्त्वम् ॥ ६१

(165) *Q* —Whom should the brahmin worship?
A —The Lord who resides in the *Gāyatrī*, in the Sun-God and in Fire.

प्रत्यक्षदेवता का माता पूज्यो गुरुश्च कस्तात ।
कः सर्वदेवतात्मा विद्याकर्मान्वितो विप्र. ॥ ६२

(166) *Q* —Who is our visible God on earth?
A —One's mother

(167) *Q* —Who is the teacher who should be worshipped?
A —One's father

(168) *Q* —Who is the effulgent being?
A:—The brahmin who possesses real knowledge

कश्च कुलक्षयहेतुः सताप सज्जनेषु योऽकारि ।
केषाममोघवचनं ये पुन सत्यमौनशमशीलाः ॥ ६३

(169) *Q*:—Which is it that destroys one's good pedigree?
A.—Anything likely to cause anger in the minds of good and pious men.

(170) *Q* —Whose words will come true?

A —The words of one who observes truth and silence and is merciful

किं जन्म विषयसङ्गः किमुत्तरं जन्म पुत्रः स्यात् ।
कोऽपरिहार्यो मृत्युः कुत्र पदं विन्यसेच्च दृक्पूते ॥ ६४

(171) *Q* —What is the cause of this life?

A —Attachment to the objects of this world.

(172) *Q* —Which is the next birth?

A —One's son

(173) *Q* —Which cannot be prevented?

A —Death

(174) *Q* —Where should we place our feet (while walking)?

A —At places which to our eyes are pure—*i e*, where there are no insects which are likely to be trampled upon by our feet

पात्रं किमन्नदाने क्षुधितं कोऽर्च्यो हि भगवदवतारः ।
कश्च भगवान् महेशः शङ्करनारायणात्मैकः ॥ ६५

(175) *Q* —Who is worthy of being fed?

A —The hungry one

(176) *Q* —Who is to be worshipped?

A —The Incarnations of the Lord

(177) *Q* —Who is the supreme God?

A —He who is both *Sankara* and *Nārāyana*

फलमपि भगवद्भक्तेः किं तल्लोकस्वरूपसाक्षात्त्वम् ।
मोक्षश्च को ह्यविद्यास्तमयः कः सर्ववेदभूरथ चोम् ॥ ६६

(178) *Q* —Which is the fruit of devotion to God?

A —Attainment of the Heavenly kingdom

(179) *Q* —What is liberation?

A —The destruction of ignorance

(180) *Q* —Which is the origin and end of all the *vedas*?

A —The letter *OM*.

इत्येषा कण्ठस्था प्रश्नोत्तररत्नमालिका येषाम् ।
ते मुक्ताभरणा इव विमलाश्चाभान्ति सत्समाजेषु ॥ ६७

This is the *phalaśloka* which is appended at the end of every work in Sanskrit It states the benefits that arise from a contemplation of the particular work In this case, it is said that the study of these verses will enable a man to occupy a place of honour in any cultured assembly

Though this work contains 67 stanzas, the first and the last are the work of other hands and it is only the remaining sixty-five verses that form the composition of the great *Sankara*

CHAPTER XLIII
TWO MISCELLANEOUS HINDU OBSERVANCES

1 *Namaskāra* or *the Hindu way of making obeisance*

Among the living beings of this world man is the only animal who has an erect growth The other creatures grow only in the direction of pronation The Hindu way of making obeisance to others consists in giving up this erect posture and attaining the position of pronation of the body In other words we prostrate before the person to whom the respects are being paid

In the Tamil language the act of prostration is described as the 'offering of a stick', the exact expression being *Dandam Samarpittal* There is also a corresponding expression in the Telugu language viz *Dandam pettu* In these expressions the word *Dandam* denotes a stick The body we bear is just a stick and nothing more So long as we stand erect we are fully conscious of the ego in us By letting our body to lie down like a stick we make ourselves forget the ego in us which is the cause of our vanity Prostration, the Hindu method of making obeisance, is hence really a *sādhana* or path towards the elimination of the feeling of "I", the ego, in us

It is further said that prostration also helps us in ridding ourselves of the bondage of life and death

2 *Tilakadhārana* or *the caste mark*

Hinduism enjoins on its followers the wearing of a caste mark Until recently the presence of this mark on a

man's forehead used to be a symbol indicative of the religion to which he belongs

Tiruman and *Tirunīṟu*, the two expressions used, respectively, by the *Viṣṇu* and the *Śiva* worshipper in South India with reference to these marks both mean the earth. The significance is that the earth is the principal among the five elements of this Universe

The material used in wearing the caste mark of one sect of the Hindus, the *Vaiṣṇavaites*, is mud, representing the earth, as already explained above. The mark worn by the other big sect, the *Śaivaites*, is made with the help of the ash produced by burning the dried dung of the cow. Thus the cow forms the principal source of supply of the material for this mark. This is supposed to signify the reverence which the Hindu should show towards the cow. The dung of the cow, by being burnt in the fire, loses its colour, odour and similar other qualities and is reduced to white ash. This is supposed to be indicative of the truth that everything in this Universe ends ultimately in the Lord *Śiva*. It is as though to remind us of this truth that we wear caste marks with the aid of these materials

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GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT AND OTHER ORIENTAL TERMS OCCURRING IN THIS BOOK

A

Ābhāsas—Corruptions
Abhāva—Non-being
Ābhicāra mantras—A type of mantras
Abhiseka—Holy bath.
Abhivādana—The concluding part of *sandhyā*
Abhyanganasnāna—Oil bath
Ācāra—Observance
Ācārakāndas—Those parts of the *Dharma Śāstras* devoted to individual conduct
Ācārya—Teacher
Ācāryabhakti—Devotion to the teacher
Adhikāra—Right
Adhikarana—Chapter
Adhisthānadevatā—Presiding deity
Ādi Śankara Bhagavatpādācārya / *Ādi Śankara*—The great *advaitic* teacher *Śankara*
Āditya—Sun
Adrsta—Unforeseen
Advaita—Non-dualism
Advaitapara / *Advaitic*—Non-dualistic
Advaitin—Non-dualist
Adhvaryu—The *Yajur Vedic* priest at a sacrifice
Āgamas—The sacred books dealing with temple worship
Āgamaśāstra—Those dealing " "

Aghamarsanasūkta—Certain *mantras* to be uttered while bathing
Āgneya—A *Brahmacārī's* penance
Āgneyāstra—An *astra*
Agni—Fire
Agnihotra— A *Hāviryajña*
Agnisamskāra—A ritual in front of the fire
Agnistoma—A *Somayajña*
Agnyādhāna—A *Hāviryajña*
Āgrahāyana—A *Hāviryajña*
Ahimsā—Non-injury to living beings
Ahorātra—Day and night
Aindra—A work on Sanskrit grammar
Aitareyaśākhā—A branch of the *Vedas*
Ākāśa—The firmament
Aksamālā—Sanskrit
Aksarābhyāsa—A *vedic Samskāra*
Aksaras—Letters of an alphabet
Āḻvārs—Tamil *Vaisnavaite* Saints
Amarakośa—A lexicon in Sanskrit
Ambāl / *Ambikā*—*Śakti*
Āmra—The mango tree
Amukta—Weapons dealing the blow from the hands of the user
Anādi—Without a beginning
Ānanda—Bliss
Anda—The oval-shaped earth
Āndhra / *Āndhradeśa*—North of Madras Province where Telugu is spoken
Āndhras—The people of *Āndhradeśa*
Anga—Organ.
Angapāśa—A branch of Indian mathematics

Angustha—Thumb.
Annadāna—Gift of food.
Annaprāsana—A *vedic* ritual
Annasatras—Free feeding houses
Antarangasādhana—Hidden path
Antyesti—Funeral rites
Anubhava—Experience
Anulomas—Offspring of unsanctioned unions
Anumāna—Inference
Anumāna pramāna—Proof by inference
Anuranana—Continued resonance.
Anustup—A metre in Sanskrit
Anuvāda—A *vedic* truth also otherwise obtainable
Anvastakā—A *Pākayajña*
Anyatara—Another
Ap—Water.
Apāna—The downward air current in the human body.
Aparāhnakāla—A part of the day
Aparigraha—A form of selflessness.
Āpasthamba—Author of certain *sūtras* for *vedic* study
Appayya Dīksitar—An eminent *advaitic* scholar in South India
Aptorayāma—A *Somayajña*.
Ārādhana—Worship.
Aranyaka—A part of the *vedas*
Ardhanārīśvara—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Siva*
Arghya, *Argyapradāna*—A part of *Sandhyāvandana*
Arjuna—1 A character in the *Mahābhārata*. 2 The tree *Terminalia arjuna*
Artha—Material riches
Arthaśāstra—The Hindu science of Economics and Politics
Arthavāda—Mere verbal discussion

Āryas—An ancient Hindu race of people.

Āśā—Desire

Āśrama— { 1 A stage of life; 2 The abode of a saint

Astakā—A *pākayajña*

Astakāśrāddhas—Those performed on each *astamī* day in the last four months of the Hindu year

Asteya—Non-coveting of others' belongings

Āstikas—Those who believe in the *Vedas*

Astra—Mantras capable of acting as destructive weapons.

Astraprayoga—The use of *astras*.

Āsura—A type of Hindu marriage

Asuras—The evil-doers—the eternal enemies of the *Devas*

Āśvalāyana—Author of certain *sutras* for *vedic* study.

Aśvamedayajña—The horse sacrifice.

Āśvayujī—a *Pākayajña*

Atharva—The fourth *Veda*

Ātharvanikas—Those following the fourth *Veda*.

Atīndriya—Same as *Samskāra*

Atirātra—A *Somayajña*

Atithi—Guest

Ātithya—The feeding of guests

Ātmā—Soul

Ātmagunas—Certain virtuous qualities.

Ātmasvarūpa—God as the individual soul in man.

Atyagnistoma—A *Somayajña*

Aupāsana, *Aupāsanakrtya* }—A *Pākayajña*

Avāntarapralayas—Minor deluges

Avāntaraprayojana—Incidental benefit

Avatāra—Incarnation

Avidyā—Ignorance

Avyakta—Un[illegible]

Avyaktaganita—Algebra.
Ayana—A period of six months
Āyda—A letter in the Tamil alphabet
Āyurveda—Hindu system of medicine.

B

Bahirangasādhana—The open path
Bali—Food offering
Bandha—Bondage
Bengālī—An Indian language
Bhāgavata—One of the eighteen *purāṇas*
Bhagavad Gītā—The immortal teaching of Lord *Kṛṣṇa* to *Arjuna* in the *Mahābhārata*
Bhagavatīsevā—*Śakti* worship
Bhairava—A *Mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*
Bhajana—Devotional and congregational singing.
Bhakti—Devotion
Bhaktimārga—The path of devotion.
Bhāṣya—Commentary
Bhāṣyakāra—Commentator.
Bhāratabhūmi—India
Bharatakhanda—That part of the world to which India belongs
Bharatas—The professional dancing class
Bharataśāstra—The art of dancing,
Bhāratavarṣa—India
Bhāva—The state of being.
Bheda—One of the *Upāyacatuṣṭaya*.
Bhikṣāṭana—A *Mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*
Bhogabhūmis—The paradises
Bhojana—Food and feeding.
Bhūgola—The round Earth.

Bhūtayajña—One of the *pañca mahā yajñas*
Bījadosas—Evil influences due to the male parent
Bījaganita—Arithmetic
Biksācarya—The taking of alms by a *Brahmacārī*
Bilva—A tree sacred to *Siva*
Bilvadala—The leaves of the *Bilva* tree
Boudhya—A branch of the *vedas*.
Brahmā—God as the creator of this Universe
Brāhma—A type of Hindu marriage
Brahmacārī—The celibate
Brahmacarya—The celibate period in a *dvija's* life
Brahmam—The All-pervading Almighty
Brāhmanas—{ 1 Those belonging to the first caste of Hindus; 2 A part of the *Vedas* }
Brāhmanasabhā—An assembly of *Brāhmins*
Brāhmana samārādhana—The feeding of *Brāhmins*
Brahmānda—The great oval-shaped Earth
Brahmajñāna—Realisation of God
Brahmalipi—A script for Sanskrit
Brahmaloka—A Hindu paradise
Brahmapītha—A part of the *Sivalinga*
Brahmarūpinī—*Sakti* conceived as *Brahmā*
Brahmasūtras—The principal work on *Vedānta* philosophy
Brahmasūtrabhāsya—commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*
Brahmasvarūpa—As Lord Almighty
Brahmavid—One who has attained knowledge of the *Brahman*
Brahmayajña—One of the *pañca mahā yajñas*.
Brhadāranyaka / *Brhadāranyakopanisad* }—One of *Upanisads*
Buddhisvādhīna—In one's senses

C

*Canaresc**—An Indian language.
Candāla—Out-caste
Candikeśvara—*Siva's* son
Candramaulīsvarī—*Śakti*
Caraka—An ancient work on *Āyurveda*.
Carmavādyas—The leather instruments of music.
Caryā—A part of the *Āgamas*.
Caturbhadra—The four virtues, kindly gift, prideless knowledge, merciful valour and self-denying riches
Cāturmāsya—A *Haviryajña*.
Caturyuga—A quadrette of Hindu age-cycles.
Caula—A *vedic* ritual
Cayanam—Th e structure on which a *Yāga* is performed.
Chandas—Prosody
Chandassūtras—The main work on *Chandas*.
Chāyāgrahas—The two shadow planets, *Rāhu* and *Ketu* in Indian Astrology
Cinmudrā—A symbol for non-dualism
Citrādi bali—A food offering in *Āndhradeśa*.
Citrī—A *Pākayajña*
Cōḷa—An ancient Hindu dynasty of South Indian kings.
Cōḷadēsa—A part of the Tamil country.

D

Daivakarmas—Rituals connected with the Gods.
Dākṣāyanī—*Siva's* spouse
Dakṣiṇā—Fee offered to a priest
Dakṣiṇabhāga—The right hand side
Dakṣiṇāmūrti—the *advaitic guru* conception.
Dāna—One of the *Caturupāyas*

* *Note* —This is to be pronounced as "*Kenarīs*"

Dānda—{1 A stick
2 One of the *Caturupāyas*.}

Dandamsamarpitta'—The Tamil expression for prostrating.

Dandam pettu—The Telugu expression for prostrating.

Darsan / *Darśana*—Worshipful sight.

Darśapūrṇamāsa—A *Haviryajña*.

Dayā—Mercy.

Deśa—Country.

Deva—Deity

Devadāsīs—Women dedicated to temple service.

Devanāgarī—Sanskrit

Devānām priyah / *Devānām priyasya*—{1 Beloved of the gods
2 An ignorant person}

Devānām piyassa—The *pāli* form of "*Devānām priyasya*".

Devatā—Deity.

Devatā upacāras—Worship of the deities.

Devayajña—One of the *pañca mahā yajñas*.

Dhanurveda—The Hindu science of warfare

Dhanurvyūha—A type of infantry formation

Dhanus—The bow

Dharma—{1 One's duty
2 The performing of good and righteous deeds}

Dharmapramānas—The Hindu scriptures.

Dharmaśāstras—*Smṛti*

Dharmaśatras—Choultries

Dharmasthānas—Repositories of religious teachings

Dhātus—{1 An etymological root
2 A humour in the human body}

Dhruva—The Pole Star

Dhvanyātmaka—Sounds without corresponding letters in a script

Dik—Direction.
Divyacaksus—Supersensitive eyes
Divyaprabhandas—The devotional poems of the Tamil *Vaisnavaite* saints.
Dosas—Evil influences
Draupadi—The wife of the *Pāndavas* in the *Mahābhārata*.
Drāvidavedas—The devotional poems of the Tamil *Śaivaite* saints
Dravidians—An ancient Indian race of people.
Dravya—An article of material riches
Dristimantras—Those which ward off the evil eye.
Durvāsas—A great *Rsi* of the old
Dussarah—The days of the *Navarātri* festival.
Dvādaśī—The twelfth day after each full or new moon day
Dvaita—Dualism
Dvaitapara, *Dvaitic*—Dualistic
Dvāparayuga—The third age in the Hindu quadrette of of age-cycles
Dvija—The first three among the four Hindu castes said to be "twice-born"
Dvīpas—Land masses

E

Ekādaśī—The eleventh day after every full and New moon day
Ekāmareśvara—Name of the Deity in the great *Siva* temple at Conjeevaram

G

Gandakī—A river in India
Gandha—Smell

Gandharva—A *vedic* deity
Gāndharva—A type of Hindu marriage
Gāndharvaveda—That part of the Hindu scriptures which deals with the fine arts
Ganeśa—*Siva's* son
Ganeśāgamas—The *āgamas* devoted to *Ganeśa* worship
Ganita—Mathematics
Garbhādhāna—A *vedic* ritual
Garbhadosas—Evil influences resulting from the female parent
Garbhagrha—The *Sanctum sanctorum* in a Hindu temple
Garudākrti—The shape of the eagle
Garudāstra—A kind of *Astra*
Garudavyūha—A type of infantry formation
Gaudapāda—A *guru* of the *smārtas*
Gaunātmā—A part of the soul
Gaurī—*Sakti*
Gautamaśākhā—A branch of the *Vedas*
Gāyatrī— 1 A *mantra* of great sanctity to the Hindus; 2 A hindu goddess
Ghatavādya—An Indian musical instrument
Gītā— 1. The *Bhagavad Gītā*; 2 Vocal singing
Gītābhāsya—Commentary on the *Gītā*
Gosamraksana—Cow protection
Godānavrtta—A penance prescribed for a celibate learning the *Rg Veda*
Govinda Bhagavatpādācārya—The great *Sankara's guru*
Grahas—Planets
Granthas—Works (Books)
Grantha Saheb—The term of respect applied by the Sikhs to their Scripture
Grha Dharmānusthāna—The observance of the house-hold *dharmas*

Gṛhastha—A householder.
Gṛhiṇī—A householder's wife
Gṛhyaśāstras—Part of the work on *Kalpa.*
Gujarātī—An Indian language
Guṇa—Quality.
Gurorupanayana—*Upanayana*
Guru—Preceptor
Gurudakṣiṇās—Fees paid to the teacher
Guruparamparā—Succession list of one's *gurus.*
Guru-upadeśa—Learning at the teacher's feet

H

Haimavatī—*Śiva's* spouse
Harihara—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*
Hastāmalakācārya—One of *Śaṅkara's* principal disciples.
Havirbhāgas—*Havis.*
Haviryajñās—A group of *vedic* sacrifices
Havis—Offerings to the gods at *vedic* sacrifices
Hemādri—A work on *prāyaścittas*
Homa—A *vedic* fire
Horā—Hour
Horāśāstra—Books on Hindu time reckonings
Hotā—The priest at a vedic sacrifice chanting the *Ṛg Veda*
Hṛdayasthāna—Heart

I

Indra—The king of the *Devas*
Indriyanigraha—Control of the senses
Indriyas—Organs of sense perception.
Īśāna—A Hindu deity
Īśāvāsya—*Īśopaniṣad*, one of the *Upaniṣads*
Īśvara—Lord Almighty

Iśvara Ārādhana—Worship of god
Iśvarabhakti—Devotion to god.
Itihāsas—The two great Hindu epics, *Rāmāyana* and *Mahābhārata*

J

Jaganmātā—*Śakti* as the mother of the Universe
Jagadguru—The world preceptor
Jāgrat—The waking state
Jalandharāsurasamhāra—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*.
Jalapātra—Drinking vessel
Jalataranga—The Indian Xylophone
Jāma—A major unit of time
Jambūdvīpa—The particular land mass to which India belongs
Jambūvrksa—The tree, *Eugenia jambolana*
Janyarāgas—The derived tunes in *Carnatic* music.
Japa—
1 Meditation
2 A part of *Sandhyāvandana*
Jātakarana / *Jātakarma*—An initiatory *vedic Smskāra*
Jātavedas—*Agni*
Jāti—
1 The Hindu caste
2 Same as *Sumānya* in *Nyāya*
Jīvanmukta—One who has attained *Jīvanmukti*
Jīvanmukti—Realising God in this very life
Jīvātmā—The individual soul in man
Jñāna—
1 Knowledge of the Supreme
2 A part of the *Āgamas*
Jñānāgni—The *Sannyāsī's* fire of knowledge
Jñānakānda—That part of the *Vedas* dealing with knowledge
Jñānamārga—The path of knowledge
Jñānāmbikā—*Śakti*.

Jyotisa—Hindu Astronomy and astrology
Jyotis-svarūpa—God in a shining effulgent form
Jyotistoma—A *Somayāga*

K

Kailāsa—A Hindu heaven
Kāla—1 Time. 2 A subdivision of the day
Kālahasti—A holy place in south India
Kālasamhāra—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*
Kali—1 *Kaliyuga* 2 Saturn
Kaliyuga—The last age in the Hindu quadrette of age-cycles
Kalpa—1 A *vedic* organ 2. A Hindu period of time
Kalpaśūtra—The main work for the *vedic* organ, *Kalpa*
Kāma—Desire or passion
Kāmāgni—The fire of passion
Kāmyopanayana—*Upanayana* done in one's fifth year.
Kāndas—Parts
Kāntāsammitam—The way of the beloved—the sweet word
Kānvaśākhā—A part of the *Vedas*
Kapālīsvara—The name of the deity in Mylapore temple.
Karma—1 Action 2 The well-known Hindu theory of that name
Karmabhūmi—This world in which alone action is possible
Karmakānda—The part of the *Vedas* dealing with actions
Karmamārga—The path of action
Kartā—The performer of a ritual
Kārttikeya—*Śiva's* son

Kāsāgni—A *Vānaprastha's* fire
Kāśī—Benares
Kathakali—A Malabar dance
Kathopanisad—One of the *Upanisads*.
Kausalyā—*Rāma's* mother in *Rāmāyana*
Kausītakī Brāhmana Upanisad—An *Upanisad*
Kāvyas—Great literary compositions
Kerala—Malabar
Khagola—The Earth
Khandana—Condemnatory
Khandas—Parts of a *Varsa*
Kharosthīlipi—A type of script
Kiñciñjas—Men who are beings with 'limited knowledge'
Kośa—Dictionary
Kotilinga—A shrine of *Siva* in *Andhradeśa*
Kriyā—A part of the *Agamas*
Krodha—Anger
Krsna—An *avatār* of *Visnu*
Krsnapaksa—The dark half of the month from a full moon day to the next new moon day
Krsnaprathamā—The day following the full moon day
Krsnavartmā—Fire
Kṛṣnayajurvedins—Followers of the *Krsnayajuśśākhā*
Krsnayajuśśākhā—A subdivision of the *Yajurveda*.
Krtayuga—The first in the Hindu age-cycle.
Ksattriya—The second Hindu caste.
Ksetra—Holy place
Ksetraganita—Geometry
Kubera—A Hindu deity
Kumāratantras—Relating to the personal worship of *Subrahmanya*
Kural—*Tirukkural*

Kūṭagaṇita—A branch of Indian mathematics
Kuyukti—Pereverse reasoning

L

Lajjā—Shyness.
Lakṣmī—*Viṣṇu's* spouse
Lāsya—Dance by a woman.
Linga—Symbol
Lingāyats—A sect of *Śaivaites* in Mysore
Lingodbhava—A *mūrtisvrūpa* of *Śiva*
Lipis—Scripts
Lohavādyas—The metal instruments of music
Lokas—The worlds
Lūtāviṣa—The poison in the spider's sting

M

Madhva—Founder of Dualism
Mādhvas—Followers of *Madhvācārya*
Mādhyānhikakāla—A part of the day
Madhyārjuna—Tiruvidaimarudūr in South India
Mādyandinaśākhā—A *vedic* branch
Māgadhaprākṛta / *Māgadhī*—Spoken forms of Sanskrit
Mahābhārata—A great Hindu epic
Mahābhāṣya—*Patañjali's* commentary on *Pāṇini's* Sanskrit grammar
Mahādeva—*Śiva*
Mahālinga—The 'Great' symbol of *Śiva* at Madhyārjuna
Mahāpradoṣa—Certain monday evenings sacred to Hindus
Mahāpralaya—The great deluge after each Hindu age or *yuga*
Mahāpuruṣa—Lord Almighty
Maharṣis—The great seers
Mahāśivarātri—A day of great sanctity to the Hindus
Makara—A Hindu month

Malayālam—An Indian language
Māmsavādya—The human throat as an instrument o music
Manana—Contemplation
Manas—Mind
Mandapa—A pillared hall
Māndūkya / *Māndūkyopanisad*—One of the *Upanisads*
Mangala—Joyousness
Mantradrstas—The *Rsis* of old who are said to have seen the *Vedic mantras*
Mantras—Incantations
Mantrasiddhi—The effect of the *mantras*
Māntrika—Magician
Manu—The well-known ancient Hindu Law-giver
Manudharmasāstras—The *Dharmaśāstra* of *Manu*
Manusyadharmas—The duties of man
Manusyayajña —One of the *Pañca mahāyajñas*
Manvantara—A period in the age of the Universe
Marai—(In Tamil) The *Vedas*
Marāti—An Indian language
Mārga—Path
Mārjana—A part of *Sandhyāvandana*
Mātrkā—*Śakti*
Matsyapurāna—One of the eighteen *Purānas*
Māyā—The conception of this world as an illusion
Melakartārāgas—The major tunes in *carnatic* music
Meru—A peak in the Himālayas
Mīmāmsā—A *vedic* Organ
Miśra—Mixed
Miśraloka—This world with pain and pleasure mixed in it.
Mithyātmā—A part of the soul
Mlecchabhāsā—A language without definite phonetics

Moksa—Salvation
Moksasāmrājya—*Moksa*
Mittikā—Mud
Mudrārāksasa—An ancient play in Sanskrit
Mūka—An ancient Sanskrit poet and devotee in South India
Mūka Pañca Satī—Verses by *Mūka* in praise of *Sakti*.
Mukhyātmā—A part of the soul
Mukta—Weapons dealing the blow from the user's hands.
Muktāmukta—Weapons first leaving but later on returning to the user's hands
Mukti—*Moksa*
Mukunda—*Visnu*
Munis—Sages
Mūrtisvarūpas—Different aspects of the particular deity described

N

Nādasvara—The Indian pipe
Nāgāstra—An *astra*
Naisadha—The story of *Nala*
Naisthika Brahmacārī—A life-long celibate
Nalāyanī—A heroine in the *Purānas*
Nālikas—A period of twenty-four minutes
Nāmakarana—A *vedic* ritual
Namaskāra—The Hindu custom of prostrating before the elders
Nandikeśvara—The bull on which *Siva* rides
Narakaloka—The Hindu hell
Nārāyana—God Almighty
Nāstikas—Those who do not believe in the *Vedas*
Nata—A male actor in a drama
Natarāja—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Siva*

Nātya—Indian dance

Navarātri—Nine days in the year specially sacred to *Śakti*

Navavyākarana—An ancient work on Sanskrit grammar

Nāyanmārs—The Tamil *Śaivaite* saints

Netrasthāna—Eye

Nighantu—Dictionary

Nimittas—Omens through agencies other than birds

Nirgunabrahmam—The attributeless Almighty

Nirodha—Suppression (of the senses)

Nirriti—A *Vedic* deity

Nirūdhapaśubhanda—A *Havir yajña*

Nirukta—A *vedic* organ

Nisedhas—Prohibitory commands

Niseka—Nuptials.

Niyama—Rule

Nrtya—The Indian dance

Nyāya—A *Vedic* organ

Nyāyaśāstras—The works on *Nyāya*

O

'Om' / *Omkāra*—The sacred *pranava* letter

P

Padārtha—(1) The import of words (2) All the concrete matter of this Universe with their different attributes

Padmapādācārya—An *advaitic guru*

Padmavyūha—An infantry formation

Padya—Verse

Paiśācas—Evil spirits

Pākayajñas—A group of *Vedic* rituals

Paksa—A fortnight

Pañca Bhūtas—The five elements, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and the Firmament

Pañcākṣara / *Pañcākṣaramantras*—A type of *mantras*

Pañcama—The untouchable

Pañca mahā yajñas—A group of *vedic* rituals

Pāñca rātra siddhānta—The *Vaisnavaite* cult

Pañcāyatanapūjā—Worship of the house-hold gods

Pāṇini—An ancient Sanskrit grammarian

Pāṇinīya—*Pāṇini's* grammar on Sanskrit

Pāpa—Sin

Parabrahman—The All-pervading Soul

Paraloka—The life after death

Paramaguru—One's immediate *guru's guru*

Paramamangala—The all-Joyful

Paramātmā—The All-pervading Soul

Paramesthiguru—The *guru* of one's *parama-guru*

Parameśvarapūjā—Worship of the Lord Śiva

Parameśvarasmaranam—Meditation on the name of *Parameśvara*

Parāparaguru—The *guru* of one's *paramesthi-guru*.

Parāśara—A *guru* of the *advaitins*

Pārāyana—A Devotional reading

Pariseccana—A ritual at meal-time

Parnaśālās—Huts of twigs and leaves

Paropakāra—The doing of good to others

Pārvana—A *pākayajña*

Pārvatī—*Śiva's* spouse

Pāśa—the binding cord (Figuritively) One's affections and attachments

Paśu— (1) Cattle; (2) Sacrificial animal

Pāśupatāstra—An *astra*

Paśupati—A cowherd.

Pātāla, *Pātālaloka*—The nether-world.

Pati—Husband.

Patibhakti—A wife's loyalty to her husband.

Pātivratyadharma—A wife's loyalty and dutifulness to her husband.

Pavitra—A ring made of *Kuśa* grass

Phalaśloka—The last verse in a sanskrit work which tells of the benefits accruing from a reading of it

Pitṛdevatās—One's dead ancestors conceived as gods

'*Pitṛdevo bhava*'—'Treat your father as your god'

Pitṛkarmas—Rituals connected with one's dead ancestors.

Pitṛs—One's dead ancestors.

Pitṛyajña—A ritual in memory of one's dead ancestors.

Prabhusammitam—The way of the master—the command.

Pradoṣa—Certain Monday evenings specially sacred

Pratinidhis—Those representative of their groups

Prājāpatya—A ritual prescribed during *Brahmacarya*,

Prakaraṇa—Chapter

Prakṛti—Matter.

Pralaya—Deluge.

Prāṇa—The vital air in the human body.

Praṇava, *Praṇavaśabda*—The sacred letter '*OM*'.

Prāṇāyāma—A process of breath control.

Prāśana—a part of the *Sandhyā* prayers

Prakāra—Part.

Praśnottara ratna mālikā—A work by *Śaṅkara*.

Prasthānatraya—Collectively the *Gītā*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Brahmasūtras*.

Prātaḥkāla—A part of the day.

...vidence through sense perception.

Pratikhandana—Counter condemnatory.
Pratilomas—The offspring of unsanctioned unions
Prativasantasomayājī—One who performs the Soma sacrifice once every spring.
Pratyaya—Suffix
Prāyaścittas—Purificatory rites
Prayoga—Practice
Prayojana—Benefit
Prthvī—Earth
Pūjā—Worship
Pumsavana—A *vedic* ritual
Punya—The opposite of *Pāpa*
Punyabhūmi—A name applied by Hindus to India
Purānas—Part of the Hindu scriptures
Purusārthacatustaya / *Purusārthas*—The four fundamental requirements of man, viz , *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Moksa*
Purusasūkta—Certain *vedic mantras*
Pūrvamīmāmsā—That part of the Hindu Scriptures dealing with actions
Pūrvānga—The introductory part
Pūrvāśrama—The stage in a *Sannyāsī's* life before his donning the saffron robes

R

Raghuvamśa—A work by *Kālidāsa*
Rajas / *Rājasic*—one of the three mental states of man
Rājataranginī—A literary work by *Kalhana*.
Rājopacāras—The respect due to kings
Rāmamantras— A kind of *mantras*.
Rāmānuja—The great *Viśistādvaitic* teacher.
Rāmāyana—The well-known Hindu epic of that name
Randhravādyas—The wind or holed musical instruments

Rasa—Taste
Rasāyanasevā—A Hindu way of preparing medicines
Rātri—Night
Rauravanaraka—A Hindu Hell
Rāvana—The villain in *Rāmāyana*.
Rg—The first among the four *vedas*
Rsi—Seer
Ṛtus—Seasons
Rudra—*Śiva*
Rudrāksam / *Rudrāksamālā*—A garland of certain beads sacred to Hindus
Rūpa—Form

S

Śabda—Sound
Sabhā—Assembly
Sadaksara—The six sacred letters in the Sanskrit expression '*Om Namah Śivāya*'.
Sadangas—The six organs of the *Vedas*
Sadangavi / *Sadangavid*—One well-versed in the six *Vedāngas*.
Saddarśanas—The six systems of Hindu philosophy.
Sādhana—Path
Sāgara—Ocean.
Sagunabrahmam—The Almighty with attributes.
Sahadharmacārinīsamprayoga—*Vivāha*
Sahasrādhikaranī—A work containing thousand chapters.
Śaivāgamas—The *Āgamas* devoted to *Śiva* worship.
Śaivaites—Worshippers of *Śiva*.
Śaivaitism—The cult of *Śiva* worship
Śaivasiddhānta—The *Śaivaite* cult and philosophy.
Śākhā—Branch.

Sakti—(1) *Siva's* spouse.
(2) A *guru* of the *Smārtas*
(3) The cult conceiving God as the Universal mother.

Sakti [or *Ambāl*] *āgamas*—The *āgamas* devoted to *Sakti* worship.

Sakunas—Omens through bird agencies.

Sālā—Arborial structure.

Sāma—(1) One of the four *Vedas*.
(2) Correction through friendly counsel, one of the *Catur Upāyas*

Sāmānya—(1) Ordinary
(2) Associations or groups.

Sāmānyadharmas—Common duties

Samārādhana—Feasting as an item of worship

Samāvartana—The ritual concluding *Brahmacarya*.

Samavāya—The quality of inseparability of matter from its attributes

Samhāra—Destruction

Samhitā—A part of the *Vedas*

Samidādhāna—A *brahmacāri's agnikārya*.

Saṁsāra—The bondage of life

Samskāra—(1) *Vedic* ritual.
(2) Memory
(3) Rules regulating pronunciations

Samyamī—A *muni*

Samyoga—Union between *Dravya* and *Dravya*

Sanātanadharma—The Hindu religion.

Sautrāmanī—A *Haviryajña*

Sandhyā
Sandhyā Upāsana
Sandhyā Vandana —A *dvija's* morning, noon and evening prayers.

Sangavikāla—A part of the day

Sāngopāngavedādhyayana—The study of the *Vedas*, their organs and their co-organs

Sankalpa—
- (1) A *samskāra* preliminary to other *vedic* rites
- (2) A part of *sandhyāvandana*

Sankara—The well-known *advaitic* philosopher.
Sankarasvarūpa—Of the form of *Sankara*
Sankaravijaya—*Sankara's* biography
Sānkhya—A system of Hindu philosophy
Sanmatas—The six systems of Hindu Worship
Sannyāsa—The fourth stage in a Hindu's life
Sannyāsī—A recluse or hermit
Saptāśvān—(=the 'seven-horsed') The sun
Saptasvaras—The seven fundamental notes in the Indian musical Octave.
Sarasvatī—*Brahmā's* spouse
Sarvamangala—The state of being ever-joyous
Sāṣṭānganamaskāra—Prostration with eight parts of the body touching the ground
Sastras—Weapons of warfare
Śāstras—The Hindu scriptures
Sastracikitsā—Surgery
Śāstraic—Pertaining to the *Śāstras*
Satī—A dutiful wife
Satkarmanirata—*Sadangavid.*
Satpadārthas—Matter or its attributes with demonstrable existence
Sattva—A quality of the mind
Satya—Truth
Satyaloka—A Hindu paradise
'*Satyam Vada*'—Speak the truth
Satyasiddhi—The benefit of truth telling
Sauca—Bodily cleanliness
Saumya—A penance prescribed for a *Brahmacārī*
Saundaryalaharī—A poem by *Sankara* in praise of *Sakti*

Sāvitrī—A Hindu goddess
Sāyankāla—A part of the day
Śesahoma—The ceremony concluding *Vivāha*
Siddhāntakaumudī—A well-known work on *Vyākarana*
Śikhā—The tuft on a Hindu's head
Śikhodakam—*Mantras* uttered while squeezing the water out of the hair after a bath
Śiksā — (1) A *vedic* organ; (2) Chastisement
Sīmanta—A *vedic samskāra*
Śisyas—Disciples
Sītā—The heroine in *Rāmāyana*
Śiva—Lord Almighty as the destroyer of this Universe.
Śivalinga, *Śivalingabānas*—Certain symbols of *Śiva*
Śivanāma—The holy name of *Śiva*
Śivapurāna—That which is devoted to *Śiva*
Śivārādhana—Worship of *Śiva*
Śivarūpinī—*Śakti* conceived as *Śiva*
Śivasvarūpa—Of the form of *Śiva*
Śiva Visnu Abheda—Oneness of *Śiva* and *Visnu*
Skāndapurāna—One of the eighteen *Purānas*
Skandha—A part of the *Jyotisa Śāstra*
Skandhatrayātmakam—The *Jyotisa Śāstras*
Śloka—A verse
Smarana—Meditation
Smārtas—Followers of the *Smrtis*
Śmaśāna—The cremation ground
Smrti— (1) The *Dharma Śāstras*; (2) Memory
Smrtikāras—Authors of works on the *Dharma Śāstras*
Snāna — (1) The daily bath; (2) The *Samāvartana* ritual
Snātaka—One who performs the *samāvartana* ceremony.

Sthiti—Preservation.
Sthūlapadārtha—Matter which can be a solid, a liquid or a gas
Stotra—A song of praise
Subrahmanya—*Śiva's* son
Śūdra—The fourth caste among the Hindus
Suhrtsammitam—The friend's advice
Śuka—A *Smārta guru*
Śuklapaksa—The bright half of the month from the new moon to the full moon day
Śuklaprathamā—The day following the new moon day
Śulba sūtras—One of the main works on *Kalpa*
Sureśvarācārya—A *smārta guru*
Sūrya—Sun
Sūryavamsa—The solar dynasty of Hindu kings
Suśruta—An ancient Hindu work in Sanskrit
Susupti—The deep sleep state
Sūtrabhāsyā—*Sankara's* commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras*
Sūtrakāra—Author of the particular *sūtras* under reference
Sūtras—Terse, versical compositions
Svapna—Dream.
Svapnāvasthā—The dream state
Svaras—Certain intonations for reciting the *Vedas*
Svarnamukhī—A river in South India
Svarūpinī—(Said of *Śakti*) of the form of
Svayamvara—A type of Hindu marriage
Syāmalādandaka—*Kālidāsa's* poem in praise of *Śakti*.

T

Tailadhārā—The flow of oil.
Taittirīya / *Taittirīyaśākhā*—A branch of the *Vedas*

Tāla—Beating time to music
Talavakāraśākhā—A branch of the *Vedas*
Tambūra—An Indian musical instrument
Tamas—A mental quality
Tāndava—Dance by a male
Tantrīvādyas—Stringed musical instruments.
Tapas—Penance
Tarjanya—Forefinger
Tarpana—*Tilatarpana*
Tattva—Philosophy
Tattvārtha—Philosophical meaning
Tejas—Fire
Telugu—An Indian language
Telungu—The Tamil word for Telugu
Tēvāram—The devotional songs of the Tamil *Saivaite* saints
Tila—The gingely seed
Tilakadhārana—The wearing of the caste mark
Tilatarpana—The offering of the gingely seed and water to one's dead ancestors
Tīrthapātra—Drinking vessel
Tirukkural—An ancient Tamil work in verse by the saint *Tiruvalluvar*
Tiruman—Material for caste marks
Tirumandira Ōlai—The court scribe in Travancore
Tirunīru—Material for caste marks
Tiruvācakam—Devotional poems by a Tamil *Saivaite* saint
Tolkāppiyam—An ancient Tamil grammar
Totākācārya—A *smārta guru*
Tretāgni—The three rituals *Āhavanīya*, *Gārhapatya* and *Daksināgni*.

Tretāyuga—The second among the quadrette of Hindu age-cycles.

Trikaranas—Thought, word and deed, the three agencies of action.

Trilinga—The sanskrit root for the word Telugu

Trimūrtisvarūpas—God Almighty as the creator, preserver and destroyer of this Universe

Tripadāgāyatrī—The *Gāyatrī mantra*

Triyāmā—Night

Tulasīmālā—A garland of the leaves of the sweet basil, *Ocimum sanctum*

Turīya—The fourth and transcendental state of being when one realises god.

Tvastā—A character in the *Vedas*

U

Udgātr—The priest chanting *Sāmaveda* at a sacrifice

Ukthya—A *somayajña*

Upadeśa—Teaching.

Upākarma—The full moon day in the Hindu month of *Śrāvana* specially sacred to the Hindus.

Upamāna—Simile

Upameya—The thing compared in a simile

Upanayana—The "threading" ceremony which inaugurates *Brahmacarya*

Upāngas—The co-organs of the *Vedas*

Upanisads—The concluding parts of the *Vedas* dealing with 'knowledge'

Upanisadvrtta—A penance prescribed for a *Brahmacārī*

Upapurānas—Those supplementary to the major eighteen *purānas*

Upāsana—Worship

Upasmrtis—Those secondary to the main *smrtis*

Upavāsa—Fast
Upāya—Device
Upāyacatuṣṭaya—The four traditional methods of Hindu chastisement, *Sāma, Dāna, Bheda* and *Daṇḍa*
Ūrdhvanaṭana—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*
Ūrdhvaretas—A means to suppress carnal desires
Uṣaḥkāla—A part of the day
Uttarakāṇḍa—The latter part of the *Vedas*
Uttaramīmāṃsā—*Vedānta*
Uttarāṅga—Concluding part
Uttararāmacaritam—The Story of *Rāma* after the destruction of *Rāvaṇa* told by *Bhavabhūti*

V

Vādya—Musical instrument
Vaidikas—The followers of the *Vedic karmas*
Vaidika Śaiva—*Śaivasiddhānta*
Vaikuṇṭha—A Hindu paradise
Vairāgya—Resolution
Vaiśeṣika—A system of Hindu philosophy.
Vaiṣṇava āgamas—Those devoted to *Viṣṇu* worship.
Vaiṣṇavaites—Devotees of *Viṣṇu*
Vaiṣṇavaitism—The cult of *Viṣṇu* worship
Vaiśvadeva—(1) A food offering
(2) A penance prescribed for the *Brahmacārī*
Vaivasvatamanu—The Manu of the present age
Vaiśya—The third Hindu caste
Vaiśyadharmas—The duties of the *Vaiśyas*
Vājapeya—A *somayāga*
Vājapeyī—One who has performed the *Vajapeyayāga*
Vākkaṇikkum maṇṭapam—The Tamil word for '*Vyākaraṇa Dāna maṇḍapa*'

Vāmabhāga—The left-hand side
Vāmācārā—Worship with offerings of liquor, flesh etc
Vāmācāra Vihitas—The rules regarding *Vāmācāra*
Vamana—Curing through vomiting
Vānaprastha—The third stage in a Hindu's life
Vārānasī—Benares
Varna—(1) Caste (2) The letters of an alphabet
Varnadharma, *Varnāśrama-dharma*—The Hindu caste system
Varnātmaka—Sounds with corresponding letters in an alphabet
Varsas—Parts of a *Dvīpa*
Vārttika—Gloss
Varuna—A *vedic* deity
Vasistha—A *smārta guru*
Vāsodakam—*Mantras* uttered while squeezing the water from the wet clothes after bathing
Vasurudrādityas—Certain divine messengers
Vāyu—A *Vedic* deity
Vāyupurāna—One of the eighteen *purānas*
Vedādhyayana—Study of the *Vedas*
Vedāngas—The *Vedic* organs
Vedanighantu—*Nirukta*
Vedānta—(1) The end of the *Vedas* (2) One of the six systems of Indian philosophy
Vedāntasūtras—*Brahmasūtras*
Vedāntin—A follower of the *Vedānta* poilosophy
Vedaprāmānya—The authoritativeness of the *Vedas*
Vedapurusa—The *Vedas* personified
Vedas—The principal scriptures of the Hindus
Vedaśabdas—The *vedic* sounds.

Vedavid—One well-versed in the *Vedas*
Vedavrttas—Certain initiatory *Samskāras*
Vedavyāsa—A *smārta guru*
Vēlvi—(in Tamil) *Vedic* sacrifice
Vibhūti—The sacred ash
Vidhis—Mandatory commands
Vidyārthī—Student
Vidyās—Branches of knowledge
Vidyāsthānas—Abodes of knowledge
Vikrtiyāgas—The non-*prakrtiyāgas* of a group
Vīnā—An Indian musical instrument
Vināyaka—A son of *Śiva*
Vīraśaivas / *Vīraśaivaites*—Staunch followers of *Śiva*
Vīravaisnavas / *Vīravaisnavaites*—Staunch followers of *Visnu*
Virecana—Curing through the flushing out of the bowels.
Vīryavattara—More valiant than
Visarga—A letter in the Sanskrit alphabet
Viśesa—Special and distinctive
Viśesadharmas—Duties specially prescribed for the various castes
Viśistādvaita—Qualified non-dualism
Viśistādvaitapara—According to *Viśistādvaita*
Visnu—God in his aspect as the preserver of this Universe.
Visnupāda—The holy feet of *Visnu*
Visnupītha—A part of the *Śivalinga*
Visnupurāna—One of the eighteen *purānas*
Visnurūpinī—*Śakti* conceived as *Visnu*
Visnusālagrāma—A symbol of *Visnu*
Vivāha—Marriage
Vrddakāśī—A place in South India
Vrsabhārūdha—A *mūrtisvarūpa* of *Śiva*

Vratas—Penances

Vyākaranadānamandapa—A hall for discourses on *Vyākarana*

Vyākarana—Grammar

Vyākaranasūtras—The main work on *Vyākarana*

Vyakta—Known

Vyaktaganita—Arithmetic

Vyaktaśabdas—Definite or known sounds

Vyavahārakānda—A part of the *Dharmaśāstras*

Vyūhas—Infantry formations

Y

Yāgas—Vedic sacrifices

Yaksapraśna—A story in the *Upanisads*

Yajamāna—The performer of a *vedic* sacrifice

Yajñas—Same as *Yāgas*

Yajñopavīta—The sacred thread worn by the *dvijas*

Yajurveda, *Yajus*—One of the four *vedas*

Yama—The God of death

Yamasmrti—One of the texts on *Dharmaśāstras*

Yamī—One who has destroyed sense cravings

Yoga—
(1) A type of mind control
(2) A system of Hindu philosophy
(3) Part of the *āgamas*

Yuga—A Hindu age-cycle

Yukta—A *Yogī* or one who has controlled the mind

Yukti—Reason

Z

Zendavesta—The scriptures of the *Pārsis*